

**Tilting the Mirror:  
Packaging “Spanish” Architecture in Late Nineteenth Century California**

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## **Abstract**

In 1893 at Chicago’s World Columbian Exposition, California devoted a great deal of resources to its promotion through a pavilion that created an image of California’s “Spanish” past. This constructed history became incorporated into California’s *self*-representation and impacted the identity of both the Anglo and *Californio* populations, and shows that exotic figures need not function through the logic of an opposite “other,” as is usually theorized. By analyzing the role of architecture in California’s Spanish “identity,” the thesis locates the representational power of architecture closer to its function in discursive practices rather than to mere formal aspects.

Thesis Supervisor: **Arindam Dutta**  
Title: Assistant Professor of History of Architecture



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## Introduction

Architectural forms are sometimes used in the construction of identity discourses. The built environment, through a mutual relation with such discourses, influences the way in which people conceive of themselves. What is interesting, however, is the way in which power determines the mechanics of such interaction. This thesis explores how nineteenth-century California codified its Hispanicity<sup>1</sup> (i.e., its “Spanish” Heritage) for commercial interests, as well as how it impacted the identity of both the Anglo and the *Californio*<sup>2</sup> populations. California’s presence at Chicago’s World Columbian Exposition of 1893 becomes a case study for the Anglo packaging and appropriation of such Hispanicity, while Anglo literary accounts and Los Angeles Spanish-edited newspaper *El Clamor Público*, provide a background for the study of identity implications in such a history.

In March 1892 an article in San Francisco’s daily journal, The Chronicle stated:

California is the only state that will go to Chicago with a building whose architecture is all her own, and the visitor will read in the pile that confronts him the whole story of the romantic lives of those who “blazed” the way along this golden shore for the civilization and advancement that has followed. Inside the portraits one will see the California of to-day. Outside one will stand face to face with the California of a day that is dead and gone.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Rather than the term “Hispanic,” which today seems to have become over-determined, this thesis uses the term “Hispanicity” to refer to Spanish notions when used in the context of the Americas.

<sup>2</sup> *Californios* refers to the citizens of California whose origins in that state precede its annexation by the U.S.

<sup>3</sup> “California at the Fair,” The Examiner (Feb. 12, 1892), San Francisco.

The Anglo population of California claimed as “all their own” their pavilion’s architecture, despite the fact that it spoke about the “story of the romantic lives” of “dead and gone” people. The story to which The Chronicle article refers, however, was a construct designed to satisfy the demands of potential travelers and settlers from the east coast. This supposed history incorporated European notions of the Orient<sup>4</sup> and U.S. conceptions of Spain, while the extreme geographical location of California, together with the doctrine of Manifest Destiny, reinforced a Zionist notion of California.

The study of California’s self-representational “Spanish” architecture illustrates how a style can be enabled to “narrate” a local ethnicity through previously articulated assumptions (however fantastic). The characteristics of California’s representation of Hispanicity in the nineteenth-century prevented *Californios* from relating in a practical way to the state’s present, thus heightening the romantic power of their story. Paradoxically, the extreme disjunction created between California’s Hispanicity and the state’s present is precisely what facilitated its incorporation into California’s self-representation, since a dead-and-gone past could hardly threaten the identity of an Anglo California. The campaign’s task was thus a contradictory one. On the one hand, it had to claim California’s belonging to the larger territory and history of the U.S. On the other, it needed to present an “exotic” image that could appeal to tourism. California’s success shows that exotic figures need not function through the logic of an opposite “other,” as is usually theorized.

That California’s Hispanicity was partly founded in fact helped greatly in making this possible. Arabs were present from the sixth to the fifteenth century in modern-day Spain, and Spaniards had been in California. In addition, Arabs were

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<sup>4</sup> The notion of “Orientalism” (and the Orient) used in this thesis is that of Edward W. Said Orientalism (NY: Vintage Books, 1979).



tolerated in Spain for a century after the discovery of America, and all ships departing to the newly discovered continent did so from the south of Spain, where an Arab presence remained strong. However, it is highly questionable whether an Arab presence was acknowledged in New Spain<sup>5</sup> when California's missions were founded in the eighteenth century. Recent archival research confirms that the builders of New Spain had no conception of an independent, Islamic style.<sup>6</sup> Even if in the beginning of the colony, urgency had produced wooden structures built with the then-extant Spanish wooden-based construction methods of Arab origin, most of Mexico's Islamic-inspired architecture had long since disappeared by the eighteenth century, partly because it was not thought worthy of consideration. Yet the factuality of California's image allowed it to select certain aspects of history for revival and renovation, as well as for pure fictional re-imagination.

By mapping Anglo's Hispanicity onto twenty-one mission structures and a few other adobe buildings, the built environment evidenced the "Spanish" past that California wanted to display. Such architecture also provided a setting for the *Californio* population in accordance with the characteristics through which this population was being portrayed. This "Spanish" architecture was further theorized in such a way that materials and typology were explicitly related to characteristics of the *Californios*, such as "backwardness" or superstition, creating an architecture that suited a marketing of California that operated within a modern, escapist desire.

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<sup>5</sup> "New Spain" refers to the Spanish territories north of Mesoamerica.

<sup>6</sup> I am indebted to Ph.D. candidate of history of architecture at the University of Pennsylvania, María Judith Feliciano, for her unpublished essay Mudejarismo in the New World, or the Myth of Islam in the Americas: The Case of Sixteenth-Century Mexican Ceramics.

But while California's milieu spoke of Hispanicity, *Californios* themselves realized that the economic and political system was not in harmony with them which, moreover, catalyzed their loss of economic and political power. This is more than a contradictory position between the Anglo praising of "Spanish" characteristics and the seizure of power from them; one can see this phenomenon as a self-reinforcing process. While the representation of these imagined *Californios* was precisely that which alienated them, their loss of power confirmed that this population *was* one from another time. El Clamor Público recorded remarks from *Californios* describing what they regarded as the Anglo's hypocrisy.<sup>7</sup> Nevertheless, what strikes one most in those articles is that *Californios* embraced the Anglo-built "Spanish" identity even while they recognized its problematic status.

By analyzing the components brought into California's Hispanicity as well as the way it operated, this thesis locates the representational power of architecture closer to its role in discursive practice rather than to formal aspects alone.

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<sup>7</sup> Anonymous: "Libertad norte-americana (North-American Liberty)," *El Clamor Público* (July 3, 1855).

## 1. Codifying the “Spanish”

*Aureliano Segundo estaba abstraído en la lectura de un libro. Aunque carecía de pastas y el título no aparecía por ninguna parte, el niño gozaba con la historia de una mujer que se sentaba a la mesa y solo comía granos de arroz que prendía con alfileres, y con la historia del pescador que le pidió prestado a su vecino un plomo para su red y el pescado con que lo recompensó más tarde tenía un diamante en el estómago, y con la lámpara que satisfacía los deseos y las alfombras que volaban. Asombrado, le preguntó a Úrsula si todo aquello era verdad, y ella le contestó que sí, que muchos años antes los gitanos llevaban a Macondo las lámparas maravillosas y las esteras voladoras.*

*-Lo que pasa—suspiró—es que el mundo se va acabando poco a poco y ya no vienen esas cosas.<sup>8</sup>*

(Aureliano Segundo was deep in the reading of a book. Although it had no cover and the title did not appear anywhere, the boy enjoyed the story of a woman who sat at a table and ate nothing but kernels of rice, which she picked up with a pin, and the story of the fisherman who borrowed a weight for his net from a neighbor and when he gave him a fish in payment later it had a diamond in its stomach, and the one about the lamp that fulfilled wishes and about flying carpets. Surprised, he asked Ursula if all that was true and she answered him that it was, that many years ago the gypsies had brought magic lamps and flying mats to Macondo.

“What’s happening,” she sighed: “is that the world is slowly coming to an end and those things don’t come here any more.”)

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<sup>8</sup> Gabriel García Márquez, *Cien años de soledad* ed. Jacques Joset (Madrid: Cátedra, 2001).

*California’s Call For Projects: The Exotic Component*

In 1893, Chicago hosted the World Columbian Exposition celebrating the centennial of the discovery of the Americas. The event has been described by American historian Alan Trachtenberg as “settling the question of the true and real meaning of America” through a process of incorporation.<sup>9</sup> California devoted a great deal of resources to its promotion at Chicago and built the biggest domestic-state pavilion on the site. California’s investment in the Chicago’s World Columbian Exposition (CWCE) was undertaken for numerous reasons. For my argument, two are most important. First, a strong presence at Chicago would help the western state in gaining recognition within the North American union of states. Second, California was competing with other western states for settlers and was in need of visibility, a need that was explicitly pointed out in various occasions. When the Vice President of California’s Fair Commission, James D. Phelan (1861-1930), reflected on the justification for California’s presence at Chicago, his statement reflected both concerns: “The material interests of the State urgently demand a desirable immigration to develop our resources, and a market abroad for the remunerative sale of our products.”<sup>10</sup> Both reasons were

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<sup>9</sup> Alan Trachtenberg, *The Incorporation of America: Culture and Society in the Gilded Age* (NY: Hill and Wang, 1982), 231.

<sup>10</sup> James D. Phelan: “California at the World’s Fair,” *California’s World Fair Magazine* 1, no. 5 (March 1892), 23.

summarized in another article: “Advertisement will be the underlying principle of the State’s exhibit.”<sup>11</sup>

The preeminent role that CWCE played in the construction of an identity as well as its use of architecture to achieve this mean makes Chicago relevant for California’s self-portrayal.<sup>12</sup> California’s pavilion—by far the biggest building to represent a foreign or domestic state—configured a particular image that California saw as relevant in upholding its identity to be, as the Chronicle reported on June 12, 1891: “characteristic of the Pacific coast,” “distinctly Californian” and “Mission type.”<sup>13</sup>

To understand the commissioner’s agreement on a “Mission Style” one has to look beyond the twenty-one extant structures built by the Spanish between 1770 and 1820. More than the mission structures themselves, nineteenth-century contemporary historiography, ethnic and territorial assumptions moving within religious rhetoric, and specific commercial interests of Anglo Californians provided the grounds for the State’s self-promotion through the appropriation of the Mission style as performed by an elite, or a simply romantic part of the population. Most strikingly, an oriental component was brought into California’s “characteristic” Mission style; “the Moorish-Mission was the type of architecture selected [by the commission].”<sup>14</sup> According to The Morning Call, the oriental component was limited to decorating: “[architects should] take from the

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<sup>11</sup> California’s World Fair Commission: “How to Advertise California,” California’s World Fair Magazine 1, no. 4 (Feb 1892), 60.

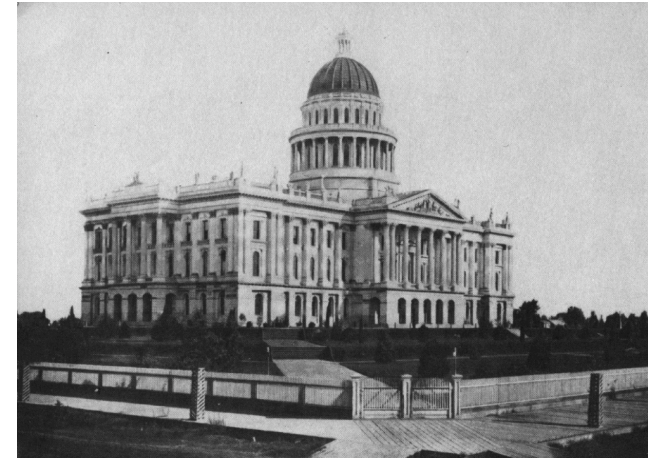
<sup>12</sup> See Alan Trachtenberg: “White City,” chapter 7 in The Incorporation of America: Culture and Society in the Gilded Age (NY: Hill and Wang, 1982), 208-234.

<sup>13</sup> For an analysis of the chronology of the terms coined to describe the required style for California’s pavilion, see Karen J. Weitze, California Mission Revival, California Architecture and Architects, no. III (Santa Monica CA: Hennessey & Ingalls, 1984), 32-43.

<sup>14</sup> World’s Fair: The Californnia commission Again in Session: A Question of Architectural Style Settled..., The Morning Call; San Francisco, CA; Jan 13, 1892.

Moorish school their ideas for ornamentation and from the Mission school their inspiration for working out something appropriate to and suggestive of California.”<sup>15</sup> The article makes a clear distinction between the uses of a Moorish ornamentation and the Mission “school.” I will illustrate how the definitions of these two components were so interrelated through their appropriation, that today it is not helpful to think of them as two separate “schools.”

The California committee’s call for projects dealt with the “exotic” aspect of their “display,” but if California was also seeking recognition [and acceptance] within the [union of states] an alien identity —as marketable as it was—would have been counterproductive. In fact, most of Anglo-built architecture in California did not comply with the image of the state’s pavilion at CWCE. The State’s Capitol, completed nineteen years prior to CWCE, was built in the Jeffersonian neoclassical style.<sup>16</sup> But at Chicago, a pavilion in a style recognizable as “American” would not have rendered California as the charming and more easily marketable state. The dilemma was evident in one of Phelan’s statements: “To attract settlers we must disabuse the public mind of the impression that our natural objects even now are exclusively ‘prairies and gristmills,’ or that our people are ‘wild and woolly.’ ”<sup>17</sup> Constructing an sophisticated exotic image detached from a “wild and woolly idea,” yet incorporating California’s image to the U.S. was the commissioner’s complex task.



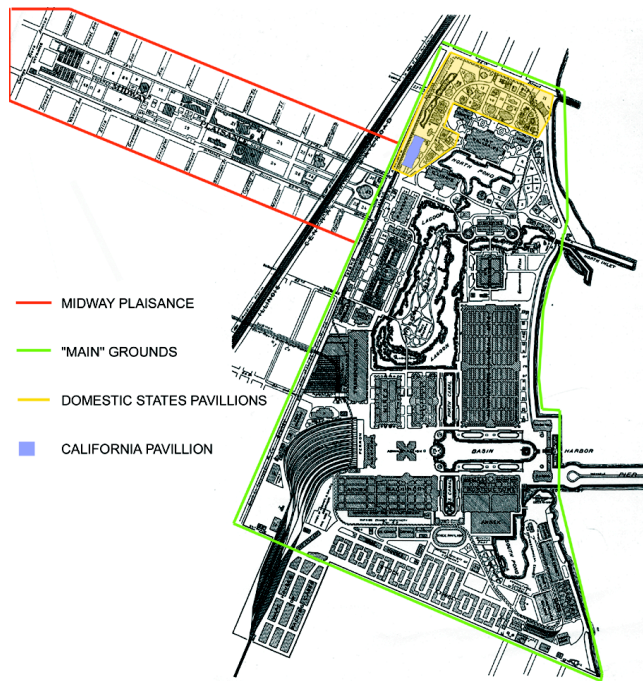
**1.01 Sacramento's State  
Capitol**

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<sup>15</sup> Ibid.

<sup>16</sup> For a survey of the symbolic [role] of architectural styles within the U.S. national discourse see Lois Craig et al., The Federal Presence: Architecture, Politics, and Symbols in United States Government Building (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1978).

<sup>17</sup> California’s World Fair Commission: “California’s Exhibition Building,” California’s Monthly World’s Fair Magazine I, no. 5 (April 1892), 23.



**1.02 Floor-plan of  
Chicago's World  
Columbian Exposition.  
(See Appendix B)**

### *Chicago Has an Opinion: The “Corporate” Component*

What helped the final exhibition overcome this predicament was not implemented in California but in Chicago. The design for California’s building was incorporated into the stylistic language of the fair—and thus to the style representing the United States as a whole—thanks to the broader context of the fair’s architectural rhetoric. Regarding this rhetoric, Trachtenberg argues that the architectural style of the fair was a crucial factor for what he conceives as a pedagogical venture regarding the future of the U.S. that took place in the exposition: “We shall take [white city] as a pedagogy, a model and a lesson not only of what the future might look like but, just as important, how it might be brought about.”<sup>18</sup> In addition, Trachtenberg insists that it was the commercial and private nature of the corporation named “World’s Columbian Exposition” which made it possible for such a monolithic message to be transmitted: “The overt message stressed the organizational structure of authority which gave to the director of Works, Daniel H. Burnham, a free hand in selecting designers, architects, engineers, and approving their plans.”<sup>19</sup> Not having a *carte blanche* for the design of their building, California’s pavilion had to find a way to make their exotic aspirations fit the requirements imposed by the CWCE.

Location served as a catalyst in normalizing California’s exotic. Much has been written on World Fairs’ master plans in general, and on Chicago’s one in particular. Yet, the fairgrounds design is worthy of attention within the study of California’s image making. Daniel H. Burnham (1846-1912) saw the fair’s stylistic organization as clearly

<sup>18</sup> Trachtenberg, 209.

<sup>19</sup> Ibid.

divided in two different sections each with distinct characteristics and not sharing the same prestigious conception:

Three distinct motives are apparent in the grouping of the buildings. Those about the Grand Basin... are essentially dignified in style; those lying farther to the north... being less formal, blend readily with the more or less *homelike headquarters buildings of the States* and foreign governments, which are grouped among the trees of the extreme northern portion of the grounds. Upon the Midway Plaisance no distinct order is followed, it being instead a most unusual collection of almost every type of architecture known to man... and reproductions, of ancient cities. All these are combined to form the lighter and more fantastic side of the Fair.<sup>20</sup>

The Grand Basin area, visually linked to California's pavilion, spoke through the powerful language of Neoclassicism and symmetry. The status of "classical" architecture is explicit in Burnham's references to "ancient cities" outside the main basin as "reproductions," thus implying that "the real and the original were to be found in the academic classicism of the Court of Honor."<sup>21</sup> Moreover, the grandiose quality of the main buildings was accentuated by their arrangement along orthogonal axes surrounding a significant body of water that enabled an appreciation of the group as a whole from various points of view. It was next to this location where California's pavilion stood.

Even if within the fair's arrangement California's pavilion was not directly in the court of honor, its position was the most privileged one among the foreign-states buildings due to its closeness to the main-grounds, size, and orientation. As commissioner De Guerot stated: "The California site is the finest of all as regards [sic]

<sup>20</sup> Rand McNally, p25, emphasis added.

<sup>21</sup> Trachtenberg p 213

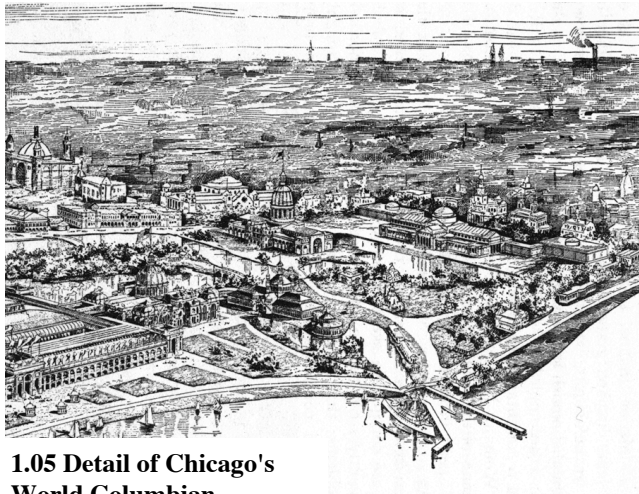


**1.03 Chicago's Main Basin Area.**

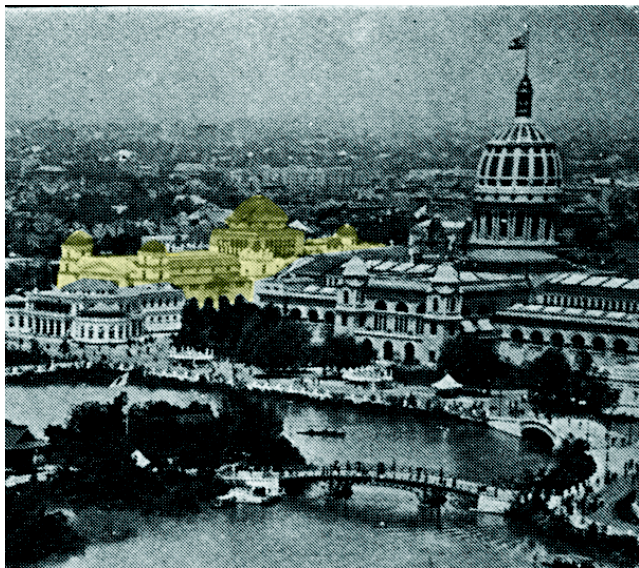


**1.04 California's pavilion from southern-most point of the main basin.**





**1.05 Detail of Chicago's World Columbian Exposition Birdseye-view (See Appendix C)**



**1.06 Aerial photograph of California's pavilion.**

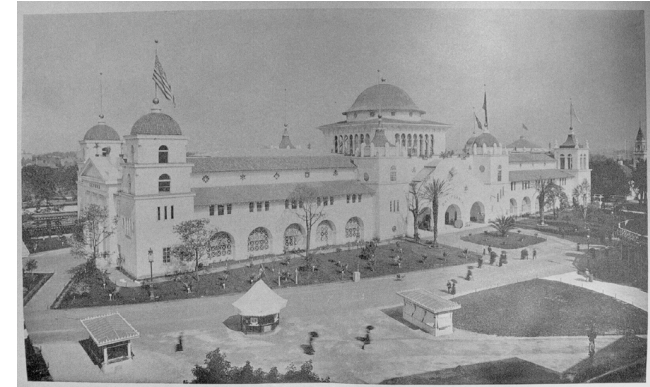
size, site and situation.”<sup>22</sup> The California pavilion shared orientation with the main buildings in a master plan using orthogonal axial relations to convey distinction. Furthermore, the building’s location enabled it to be, first, the initial visited among the domestic-states buildings; and second, the only one seen from the Court of Honor, even from its southern-most point. Lastly, a more subtle connection, although difficult to be seen in a non-colored floor plan, was one built through opposition. The visitors that approached the grounds destined to the State buildings from the east side, could only access this area after crossing by bridge a water channel and, more important, after having visited the foreign state pavilions. In contrast, access to California’s pavilion was seamlessly connected from the rest of the fair. From either side the visitor approached the northern-most grounds of Chicago’s World’s Fair Columbian Exposition; the connection—or rather the lack of rupture—between the California Pavilion’s immediate surroundings to the rest of the fairgrounds must have contributed to the idea of California’s “formality” as a domestic state. The preeminence of California’s building is also evident in the official bird’s-eye rendering of the exposition as well as in elevated photographs: aside from being one of the only three state buildings with a faithful representation on the view, the above-mentioned axial coincidence between California’s Pavilion and the horticulture and woman’s building is made explicit.

Such a prominent location within the fair came with design constraints. California commissioners presented a group of preliminary projects to Burnham in June 1892 for approval. The projects varied in form and some sported rather irregular ones. Architectural historian Karen J. Weitze has noticed that even if in June 1892 the

<sup>22</sup> Anonymous: “Opinions of Commissioner De Guerville: A Frenchman’s Estimate of the Great Exposition-Works of Art,” *Chronicle* (January 23, 1892).

approval of California's pavilion appeared to be solved, by October it was clear that Burnham's earlier approval was tinged with some reservations. Burnham, after the experience with California's first projects, published guidelines for all the domestic-state buildings. Making reference to his earlier description of the whole fairgrounds, he stated that the buildings had to be symmetrical, with rectangular plans, and that the architecture should be "dignified in style, formal rather than picturesque."<sup>23</sup> The final design for the pavilion was constrained by these new rules and it is these constraints that helped California's building create a middle ground where the Moorish/Mission style was normalized and integrated to the demands of CWCE.

The inclusion of California's building in the "main area" of the fairgrounds, its relation to it, and the constraints that came with such a location, allowed Phelan's "homelike" features to be brought into the pavilion rather than to conceive it as a reproduced structure.<sup>24</sup> This reading of the pavilion, enabled California to present itself through the Mission-Moorish building mentioned in the call for projects, while at the same time disabusing the public of the impression that California was a land of the "wild and woolly." By incorporating everybody's petitions, the final building seems to have transcended all of the individual ones and delivered a design that conjugated everybody's will.

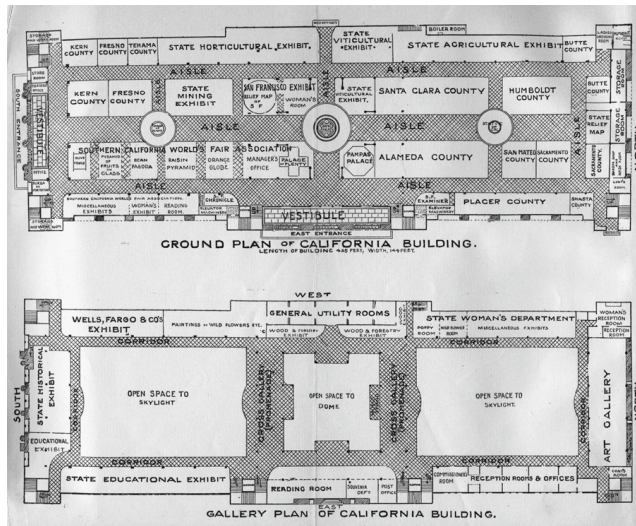


**1.07 California's pavilion  
at Chicago's World  
Columbian Exposition.**

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<sup>23</sup> Weitze, 36.

<sup>24</sup> It is important to keep this distinction in mind for a further discussion on "appropriation." California claimed that its history had only started "less than fifty years" before the Columbian Exposition, contradicting the categorization of its pavilion as a Homelike structure rather than a "reproduction."



**1.08 California pavilion's floor-plan**



**1.09 California pavilion's main entrance**

### *California's Pavilion: An "incorporated exotic"*

The final design for California's pavilion by the Cornell-educated architect A. Page Brown (1859-1896), featured a symmetrical rectangular floor with towers placed in each corner. Towers also flanked the center vestibule that served as a main entrance. This vestibule led to a triple-height square atrium covered by a dome. From the upper floor, a corridor encircling the perimeter of the building allowed a comprehensive vista of the products displayed on the ground floor. Arches repeated along the east side of the building. In elevation, however, the building had a more liminal status pointing towards the "exotic." Different window settings, four types of towers, and various kinds of windows resembling those found in some of California's missions were featured in the building. Finally, formal elements such as horseshoe-shaped windows surrounding the drum, and various interior structures added a Moorish significance to California's building. This arrangement undermined the unity and rationality of the floor plan and allowed the architect to combine what Burnham had described as "opposites" in his guidelines: the building's architecture was formally dignified in style, *and* picturesque. Unlike previous World Exposition buildings with a much more straightforward "Oriental" typology, California's building integrated Mission and Moorish elements into a "dignified" structure to represent its sponsors. The symbolic power of this collapsed image, as well as its social and cultural consequences, can hardly be overestimated.



In our current discourse, it is complicated to analyze an architecture featuring “Moorish” components within a discourse of identity creation. In 1979, Edward Said discusses the way in which European imperial institutions constructed a concept of the Orient that was taken for granted in history, politics, and the arts. This conception, so he holds, helped Europeans construct their identity in opposition to this imagined Orient.<sup>25</sup> Nevertheless—and as paradoxical as it may seem—Said’s theory that questions a given conception, by becoming so influential it may prevent us from identifying particularities of specific cases. Moreover, the preeminence of form in architecture’s history and theory has flattened cases that should not be thought of as similar even if some of their characteristics overlap.<sup>26</sup> I will argue that even if some of California’s exotic components were part of a shared western cultural phenomenon, some others were specific to the U.S., thus rendering California’s Mission/Moorish architecture different from highly theorized European counterpart.

One of the main differences between Europe’s Orientalist renderings and California’s exotic resides in the narrative that appropriated the exotic, which in the case of California was needed in appealing to travelers and settlers. The authentic aspect of California’s exotic displayed at CWCE is, thus, a paradoxical one: already difficult to conceive an exotic image as representative of a state in the process of being incorporated into the narrative of the United States, the fact that this exotic had also to

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<sup>25</sup> Edward W. Said, *Orientalism* (NY: Vintage Books, 1979).

<sup>26</sup> The problem of mapping assumptions into architectural forms does not necessarily manifests in works looking into what is now referred to as Oriental architecture, but rather in subsequent readings of this architecture based on formal resemblance. For an example of the concept of Orientalism helpfully applied to architectural analysis see: Zeynep Celik, *Displaying the Orient: Architecture of Islam at Nineteenth Century World’s Fairs* (Berkeley: Berkeley, 1992)

be seen as authentic is an oxymoron. Yet, this need should not be underestimated. By the late nineteenth in order to depict tourist destinations in a more appealing way, the similitude between U.S. locations and more romantic old world locations had already been constructed. In his 1854 travel-book Lotus Eating, George William Curtis (1824-1892) points out the inspiration that the Isle of Rhodes provided in naming Rhode Island. He then proceeds to describe Newport's climate as reminiscent of the Mediterranean: "only the monotonous and melancholy reminded you that the wind [was] not warmed by African sands...all day—if you had been in Italy and know its Southern shore—you [would] look for the orange groves..."<sup>27</sup> In his text, however, a factual heritage only implies an ideological inspiration for Newport: "Was it strange that the pleasant dream inspired by so singular a triumph of Art as the city of Venice should return upon the cliffs at Newport, in view of the possibilities and influences of a society just beginning?"<sup>28</sup> Contrarily, if California managed to present a "factually-based" exotic, the state's marketing would be more effective.

California's marketing campaign worked within the logic of escapism found in U.S. cities as well as in other industrial centers of the time. By the closing decade of the nineteenth-century U.S. society had shifted from being self-employed to one increasingly oriented to the urban and the industrial. This shift generated a certain anxiety in the population that saw new urban settings as places where people lost control over their own work and had the burden of discipline and stress. New urban dwellers displaced from the countryside were conceived as an allegory for a

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<sup>27</sup> George William Curtis, Lotus-Eating: A Summer Book, Illustrated by Kenst (NY: Harper & Brothers, 1854). 179

<sup>28</sup> Ibid., 190

mechanized life, or more generally, for humanity's distancing from nature. It is within this anxiety that California's exotic operated to complement modernity.

American cultural historian William Leach has pointed out how U.S. citizens channeled their escapist desire.<sup>29</sup> According to him, syncretic mass commercial products incorporating traditions and myths were created in the U.S. as opposed to a European model that articulated aesthetic desire in high art: "Americans channeled their desires almost entirely, and seemingly without equivocation, into the creation of mass commercial forms...[incorporating] all traditions and myths (religious and secular, folk and foreign) for commercial purposes."<sup>30</sup>

It should be pointed out that at this historical moment architects thought of their profession as contributing to urban centers through a different logic than that of California commissioner's. American architect Henry van Brunt (1836-1903) explained in Century magazine: "[Chicago's fair] evidence that the finer instincts of humanity have not suffered complete eclipse in this grosser prosperity, and that, in this headlong race, art has not been left entirely behind." For van Brunt's the architecture of Chicago's exposition constituted the "artistic" aspect of the fair's display of machinery, and agricultural appliances. Such an aspect, so he holds, was not providing an "alternative" to progress, but rather condoning it. Further in the text he comments: "It is the high function of architecture not only to adorn [the triumph of materialism], but to condone, explain and supplement it." The fact that "art" was still present in the fairgrounds did not necessarily provide an escape from modernity but would rather

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<sup>29</sup> William Leach: "Strategists of Display and the Production of Desire," chapter 4 in Consuming Visions: Accumulation and Display of Goods in America 1880-1920 (NY: The Henry Francis du Port Winterthur Museum, 1989), 99-132.

<sup>30</sup> Ibid., 100.

validate it. Through an involuntary cynical argument van Brunt stated: “some elements of ‘sweetness and light’ may be brought forward to counterbalance the boastful Philistinism of our times,” and therefore allow it to keep on progressing. Nevertheless, California commissioners, saw their pavilion as a consumable object offering an alternative to the urban industrial centers.

### *The European Heritage*

A strong component of California’s exotic derived from Europe’s earlier depiction of the Middle East. European representations of its areas of influence have been theorized within the broader phenomenon of colonialism where the unequal relation between the metropole and its colonies generated a two-way reinforcing process. This relation, on the one hand, allowed colonizers to represent “other” people through the colonizers own logic. On the other hand, the representations coming out from such interaction shaped a specific perception of the colonies that justified the presence of the colonizers in the colonized territories. European documents started to categorize the objects they depicted through specific depiction methods. In the case of architecture the illustrated buildings and its elements started to be conceived as representative of an earlier stage in civilization within a progressive notion of history. James Clifford describes such depiction within the phenomenon of the “Savage Paradigm.”<sup>31</sup> In it, an “ethnographic present” of other people is actually a past appropriated by whoever depicts it.

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<sup>31</sup> James Clifford: “Of other Peoples: Beyond the “Salvage” Paradigm,” chapter discussions in Contemporary Culture ed. Hal FOSTER (Seattle: DIA Art Foundation, 1987), 121-129.

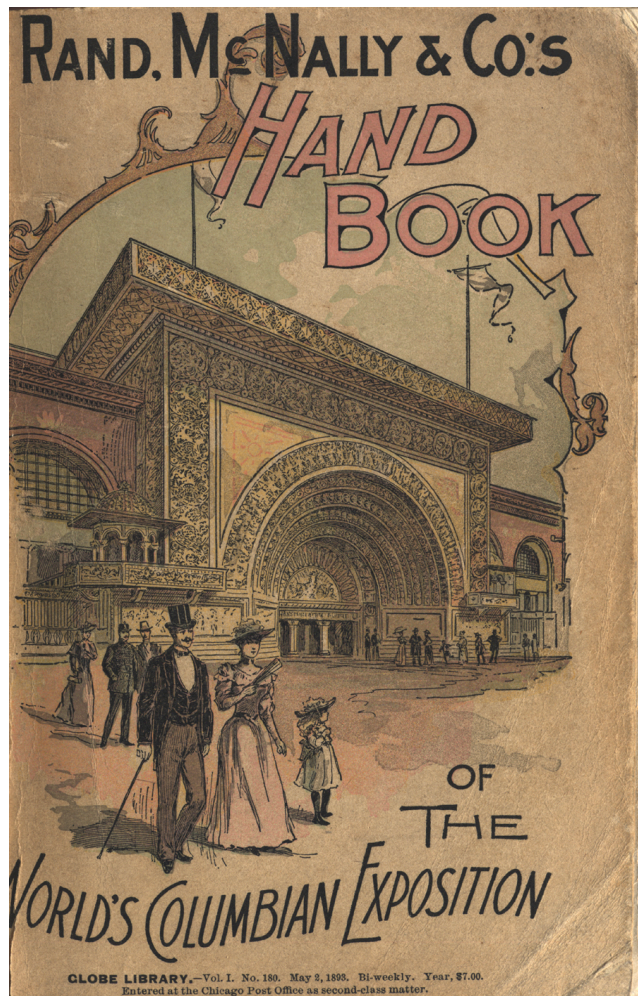
Nevertheless, even if historians have argued that this understanding of architecture represented indigenous colonial architecture stripped from its “original” meanings, one has to note the new purpose and significance that was conferred upon such architecture. The new codification of this architecture could be understood as a European product tailored through a process of dismemberment and cataloguing much the same way as it had previously happened with classical architecture allowing architects to treat Oriental architecture in a similar way. Extreme decontextualization and arrangement of architecture in catalogue-like documents as well as its subsequent circulation allowed it to be thought of as parts to be juxtaposed in subsequent buildings somehow distanced from the original scope of such documents. In short, the representational status of such architecture faded by becoming fashionable and popular. Still, as explained by Said’s school of thinking, this architecture constituted both a spatial and a temporal exotic: firstly, it was conceived as alien to Europe’s territorial limits, and secondly, it was understood as alien to Europe’s present. These exotic forms started to be understood as the image of humankind’s—read Europe’s—discovered heritage, and built a catalogue of de-contextualized exotic objects available to Europeans thanks to “curiosity” and “scientific” research.

Nevertheless, works like Napoleon’s (1769-1821) Description de l’Egypte (1808-1828), and in the case of “Moorish” architecture, Owen Jones’s (1809-1874) Details and Ornaments from the Alhambra (1845), and Jules Goury’s (1803-1834) Plans, Elevations, Sections, and Details of the Alhambra (1842-1845), provided the grounding for the forms. Carefully printed, lavishly illustrated, and of big-format, they defined not only what exotic architecture looked like, but also made it available for incorporation into European and American leisure buildings, garden follies, exhibition



**1.10 Page from Plans, Elevations of the Alhambra**





**1.11 Cover of the Rand McNally guide**

buildings, or residences. In the case of British garden follies, for example, these structures were understood as direct references to a European somehow mythical past, and both exotic remakes and “picturesque” ruins closer to a Greco-roman antiquity worked within the same historical conception.

The wide use of what was understood as exotic in the construction of public buildings disseminated this image to a wider audience. In the Great Exhibition of 1851 at the Crystal Palace, for example, a number of “courts” were incorporated as part of the exposition, one of which was named after the Alhambra. The use of these forms had become so recurrent that it would have been rare *not* to find these forms in this type of architecture. Guatemala built a Moorish pavilion for the CWCE, while Mexico sent a Moorish kiosk to New Orleans’ fair. Both Latin American countries had no interest in consolidating a colonial empire nor indulged in expansionist territorial ideas. Moreover, Mexico’s idea for New Orleans was to display itself within modernity rather than through nationalism. Somehow, to the eyes of the Mexican government of the time, a Moorish pavilion was the way to achieve such a task.<sup>32</sup> In 1893 Rand McNally’s company published its Handbook to the World’s Columbian Exposition featuring a cover depicting Henry Sullivan’s Golden Portal. The juxtaposition between the Moorish-like balconies—located in the main basin area of the fair—and the western—fashioned visitors depicted in the foreground was not seen as a contradiction of terms but rather of fulfillment of expectations. Nevertheless, when deployed by California, a discourse integrating religion, the U.S. concept of territory, and a particular conception of Spain, re-empowered the faded representational status of these exotic forms.

<sup>32</sup> Elisa García Barragán: “Kiosco morisco: evocación de universalidad,” Artes de México 55, no. 2 (2001), 75-80.

### *American Religious and Territorial Components*

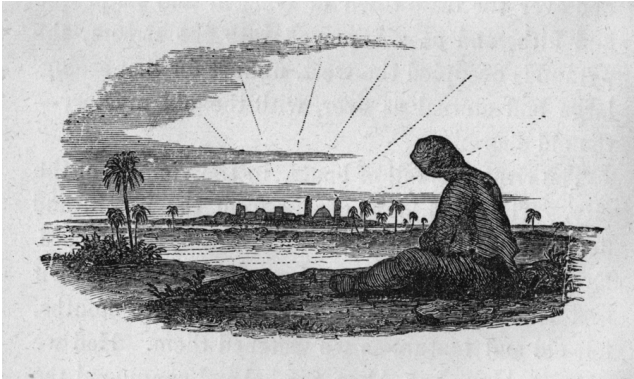
The exotic image was alien in the United States because of its opposition to puritan notions of color and exuberance. Moreover, religious notions materialized in the Manifest Destiny also played a part in the understanding of this exotic since Oriental lands of the Bible were juxtaposed with the New World. American Writer Herman Melville Redburn (1819-1891) in 1856 proclaimed that the Americans were “the peculiar, chosen people—the Israel of our time.”<sup>33</sup> In his book about Orientalism in America, historian Fuad Sha’ban points to the relation created between biblical lands and the American territory. This relation generated much of the pilgrim’s inspiration to settlement in the expanding territories of the United States: “after the American Revolution—so he holds—the notion of being a chosen people, took an added significance and the new state became the symbolic kingdom of God.”<sup>34</sup> Although Fuad Sha’ban makes sweeping generalizations, the collapsing of Biblical lands with the American Territory applies well to California’s image making. Americans envisioned the Coming Kingdom ready to be born in New Jerusalem.

By the nineteenth-century, however pious the American conception of the lands of the Middle East might have been, these lands were considered as exotic and their sensual implications was something American pilgrims to the Holy Lands expected. An example of the dual relation to the Middle East that conceived, on the one hand, a sensual exotic while on the other hosting the notion of Zion, can be found in Sarah Haight’s traveling letters. Published in 1840, these letters illustrate how she was torn

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<sup>33</sup> Fuad Sha’ban, Islam and Arabs in Early American Thought: The Roots of Orientalism in America (Durham, North Carolina: The Acorn Press, 1991), p. viii

<sup>34</sup> Ibid.



**1.12 Ending Image from  
Curtis's Nile Notes**

between “delightful emotions” stimulated by the Orient and sacred associations of those lands’ religious past. She explains,

Not caring to divest myself of the delightful emotions I experienced, I floated down the Bosphorus with Europe and Asia on either hand, having fresh in my mind the struggles... of crusading armies with pike and pennon, lance and oriflamme.<sup>35</sup>

The fact that Haight refers to “delightful emotions” even when she conceives of them as something that should be suppressed is indicative of the role that exoticism played in her Middle Eastern conception. This imagined Orient bound puritan ideas about the Middle East to the features through which those lands had been historically conceptualized in Europe.

An explicit linkage between the U.S. and the Orient was also made through the mechanics of Clifford’s “Savage Paradigm.” As also pointed out by Sha-Ban the Arab of the dessert reminded of an American pristine past and by so doing the past of the Arabs was incorporated into American ideas of Native Americans. In 1847 an American expedition sketched, took specimens, and looked for biblical evidence in the Dead Sea. Its commander Lieutenant William Francis Lynch (1801-1865) presented comparisons between the life, warfare, and “walking gait of the two races,”<sup>36</sup> the Arab and the Native American. But travel writer George W. Curtis (1824-1892) provides the richest comparative exercise in his 1851 Nile Notes,

Strangely and slowly gathers in your mind the conviction that the last inhabitants of the oldest land have thus a mysterious sympathy of similarity with the aborigines of the youngest. For what more are these Orientals than sumptuous savages?<sup>37</sup>

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<sup>35</sup> Ibid., 180.

<sup>36</sup> Ibid., 189.

<sup>37</sup> Ibid.

These notions of the Orient, already related to the U.S., were the ones brought into California's marketing campaign and helped in the creation of a sumptuous and exotic California that countered the "wild and wooly"-like notion to which Pheland referred to.

*Irving "et al" Contribute*

The preeminent tool in achieving such a conception was the discourse that conferred an imagined Spanish/Oriental meaning to California's past, thus creating a new construct from a previous one. Literary critic Pere Gifra-Adroher has pointed out how some nineteenth-century writers thought that romance could not be convincingly situated in the U.S.: "No author, without a trial, can conceive of the difficulty of writing a Romance about a country where there is no shadow, no antiquity, no mystery, no picturesque and gloomy wrong, nor anything but a common-place prosperity, in broad and simple daylight... It will be very long, before romance'writers may find congenial and easily handled themes... in the annals of our stalwart Republic..."<sup>38</sup> In overcoming this predicament, California brought into its narrative the existing nineteenth-century romantic notion of Spain to construct its own exotic. Most U.S. citizens' relation to Spain was mediated by literary accounts that varied in scope and genre. These different portrayals rather than contradictory accounts competing among themselves were seen as a validated body of works that permitted an ambivalent image of Spain.<sup>39</sup> Literary

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<sup>38</sup> Nathaniel Hawthorne, The Marble Faun: or, The Romance of Monte Beni (Columbus: Ohio State University, 1968), 3.

<sup>39</sup> For an in-depth analysis of the relation between American scholarship, the foundation of Hispanic departments within American Universities and their relation to the portrayal of a decadent Spain see, Richard L. KAGAN: "Prescott's Paradigm: American Historical Scholarship

scholar Richard L. Kagan points out how the Spain portrayed in literary works worked in the construction of U.S. identity as a contemporary Other representing everything that the United States was not supposed to be. Moreover, historical data would sometimes moralize the account by highlighting the mayday of an empire because of catholic superstition and an absolutist ruling tyranny even when its early vigor enabled the discovery—and ruling—of the American continent. This moral history carried the further implication that it was up to the United States to take over the American lead left empty by Spain.

Washington Irving (1785-1859), described Spain for a nineteenth-century audience,<sup>40</sup> The Alhambra (1832), becoming the most influential book on Spain at the time. In it, the notion of history found in the “savage paradigm” previously mentioned worked with even grater refinement. The Alhambra’s portrayal of Spain allowed its

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and the Decline of Spain,” appendix to Spain in America: the Origin of Hispanism in the United States ed. Richard L. Kagan (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2002), 247-276. As a summary of Kagan’s Prescott Paradigm a description found in the cited essay follows: “What I call ‘Prescott’s paradigm’ is an understanding of Spain as the antithesis of the United States. Most of the elements contained in this paradigm anti-Catholicism, criticism of absolutism, support for commerce and individual liberty. Just as Prescott cherished the notion of ‘American exceptionalism,’ the idea that his own country possessed a unique history that destined it for greatness, Spain was equally exceptional but seen from the inverted perspective of a nation separated from the European, that is, Protestant, mainstream, and consequently bereft of the progress and prosperity that flowed in its wake...Prescott’s paradigm was less a clear model of analysis than a series of assumptions and presuppositions about the inherent backwardness of Spanish culture and the progressiveness and superiority of the United States. Yet this particular formulation, especially when combined with the pervasive belief in national character engendered by the rise of nineteenth-century nationalism, managed to exert a powerful influence on the way succeeding generations of U.S. scholars thought and wrote about Spain.”

<sup>40</sup> History of the Life and Voyages of Christopher Columbus (1828), The Conquest of Granada (1829), The Voyages and Discoveries of the Companions of Columbus (1831), The Legends of the Alhambra (1832), Legends of the Conquest of Spain (1835), Wolfert’s Roost (1832), Mahomet and His Successors (1849), Spanish Papers and Other Miscellaneous (posthumous, 1866).

conception to be isolated in a historical past even when the Spanish metropolis of a global empire was loosing its territories, had been recently invaded by France, and was struggling to impose a liberal constitution to the absolutist Ferdinand the VII. Especially salient for this thesis, a built structure constituted one of the major elements enabling such a portrayal.

In 1886 Californian traveler John Franklin Swift pointed out Irving's relevance for the formation of the American conception of the place: "Washington Irving has done more to raise the Alhambra to a high place among the ancient Moorish palaces of Spain than did its architects and painters."<sup>41</sup> Indeed, Irving was the most prolific of all authors writing on Spain in his life span. Commissioned in 1826 to translate a collection of Columbian papers, Irving was appointed cultural attaché to the US legation in Madrid. This commission gave him both access to documents not previously researched by American historians, and spare time to start a research that would lead to later publications of his own.<sup>42</sup> Upon his arrival, Irving was enchanted by the medieval past of Spain and saw the country through lenses that tinted everything with romance. I will not endeavor to discuss the contrast between Irving's work and previous textual descriptions of Spain that engaged with Spain's contemporary politics and economic situation. Gifra-Adroher insightful explanation on the topic would make such a description reiterative.<sup>43</sup> However, it is salient for my argument to analyze the way in

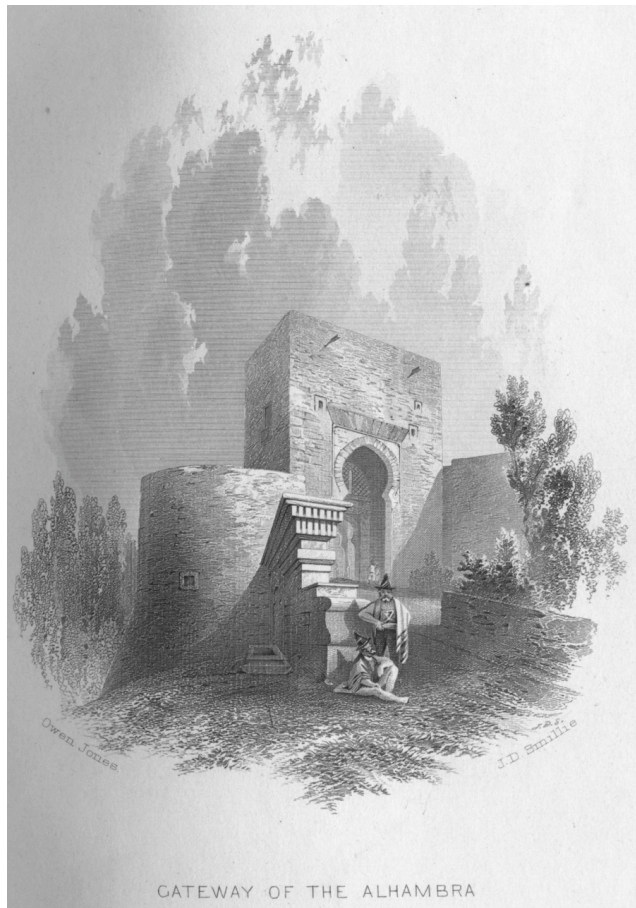
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<sup>41</sup> See Pere Gifra-Adroher: "Between Oriental Past and Ethnographic Present: Washington Irving and the Romancing of Tattered Spaniards," chapter 5 in Between History and Romance: Traveling Writing on Spain in the Early Nineteenth-Century United States (London: Madison-Teaneck, 2000), 122-157.

<sup>42</sup> As early as 1826 Irving was conducting work in the city of Granada that would later incorporate in his volumes.

<sup>43</sup> Gifra-Adroher, 122-157.





**1.13 Illustration from  
1865 Putnam's edition of  
The Alhambra**

which the architecture of the Alhambra relates to the rhetorical methods deployed by Irving.

Irving's Spain was to a large extent governed by his fascination for a retreat from what he described as "the bustle and business of the dusty world."<sup>44</sup> But to find such a historically unpolluted paradise within the Spanish metropolis of a global empire loosing its territories, recently invaded by France, and struggling to impose a liberal constitution to the absolutist Ferdinand the VII was quite a titanic enterprise. Irving's journey to the south of Spain—which constitutes the first chapter of The Alhambra—seems to be an allegory of Irving's decision not to confront Spain's reality. Distant from Madrid's turmoil, the Andalusian region became Irving's setting for the pristine state beyond the pressures of history that he was looking for. It was in this region where a solitary Irving escaping from the "commonplace scenes and every-day life,"<sup>45</sup> confronted the abandoned ruins of the Alhambra.

Such an object had the power of monuments later to be recognized by Alois Riegl by bearing both "age" and "artistic" values.<sup>46</sup> In addition, it also overcame what Riegl himself saw as a paradox in the monuments treatment, according to him, if a structure was restored to accommodate any use, such a restoration would undermine its "old" value. By being an inhabited structure, the Alhambra possessed the "use" value while retaining its other two. At the same time, in a two-way relation the Alhambra rendered its current inhabitants as picturesque and "aged" characters. Lastly, the physical characteristics of the Alhambra conferred to this picturesque-yet-in-use ruin

<sup>44</sup> Gifra-Adroher, 224.

<sup>45</sup> Gifra-Adroher, 136

<sup>46</sup> Alois Riegl, "The Modern Cult of Monuments: Its Character and Its Origin," trans. Kurt W. Forster and Diane Ghirardo, in Oppositions 25 (Fall 1982): 21-51.

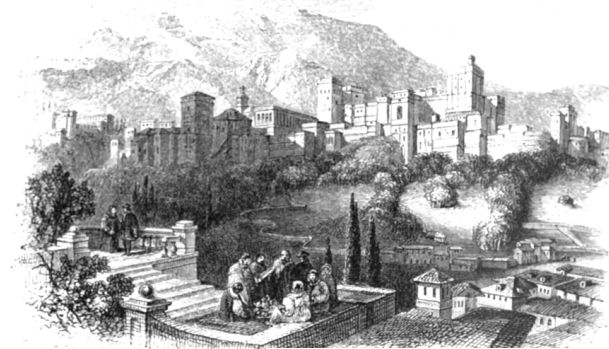
the possibility of being read as a complete space, a reading of the palace that Irving masterfully exploited. The Alhambra's vastness, open spaces, and vistas, did not confer to it a notion of seclusion, but rather made it seem like a space in use by the inhabitants of Granada. Nevertheless, for Irving—as to any physical visitor to the site—the “open” spaces of the Alhambra were actually rather secluded. They were accessed through labyrinth-like paths, located within a vast palace, surrounded by an elm-forest, circumscribed by a wall, and located at the top of a hill.

The dichotomy of an open space defined by architectural boundaries provided a well-defined territory inhabited by specific people that Washington Irving approached with his recognized amateur ethnographer persona. The characteristics of an ethnographic work permeated the text and rendered his novel as a truthful depiction of a contemporary community set in an ancient and magnificent architectural ruin. An example of Irving's ethnographic [take] is found in the account where Irving looks at a procession pass beyond his balcony. The scene infuriates him because he thinks that the young woman taken to the monastery has been forced to her vows. His informant, however, brings him “back to reality” by letting him know that the bride legitimately wanted to become a nun. The informant's correction of Irving's original interpretation of the event legitimizes the verisimilitude of the rest of the text.

The inclusion of daguerreotypes in the “Darro” edition of 1891 edition of the Alhambra further rendered the work with anthropologic characteristics. As pointed out elsewhere, the high level of detail that daguerreotypes provided rendered the image as accurate representations of what they depicted. Of the six images—out of thirty-one—illustrating inhabitants of the Alhambra the one titled “A Gypsy of the Albacin” provides the subject with most picturesque qualities. An old man is frontally depicted

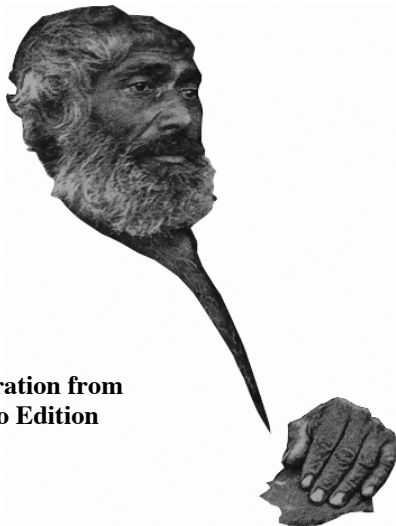
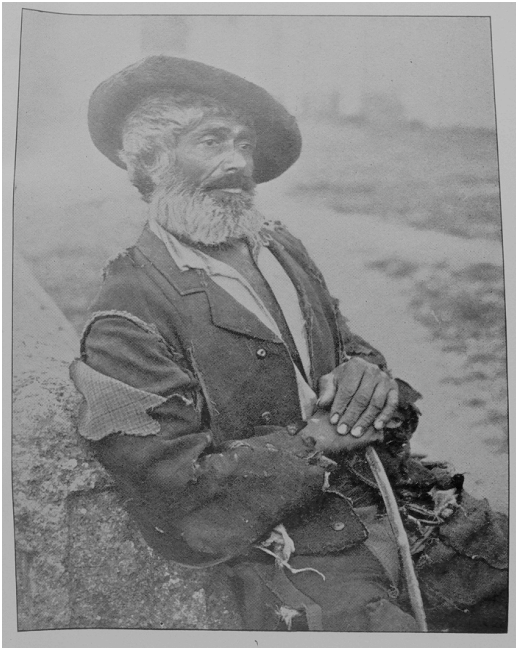


**1.14 Illustration from  
1854 David McKay  
edition of The Alhambra**



**1.15 Illustration from  
1854 David McKay  
edition of The Alhambra**





**2.16 Illustration from  
1891 Darro Edition**

before a background where the rough and abruptly-ended edges of the depicted buttresses made it through its blurriness. The charm of the picture for an audience bored of “common-place prosperity” was reinforced by the decayed stated of the gypsy’s clothes. The means that allow the display of body parts is also worth noticing. Firstly, the man’s hat is tilted to such an extreme that most part of the hair that would have been seen from such angle without the hat is still displayed. Secondly, the man’s open shirt allows the viewer to peak into his hairy chest, an odd gesture in a climate that would require covering oneself even with such a ragged jacket. This subtle striping of the gypsy’s body together with the position of the man’s hands conferred him of a certain aura of wisdom that becomes evident when one looks at the image of the gypsy’s body-parts in isolation.

To top it all, Irving’s novel included “tales” from the palace’s medieval past that complemented the “Spain” being summoned in a threefold relation between the tales and the Alhambra’s architecture. First, by the time the reader reached the tales, architectural settings had previously been described in the novel’s primitive present thus incorporating the fictive medieval tales into the novel’s contemporary time. Second, the architecture itself provided an exotic ambiance for the tales as Irving acknowledged: “[I would seek] those parts of the Alhambra which are most favorable to this phantasmagoria of the mind.”<sup>47</sup> And last, the tales would render even more exotic the architecture and, by default, its current inhabitants. The binary of the tales on the one hand and Irving’s ethnographic-like report on the other, provided a Spain that was a primitive perennial present with an Oriental and royal past fully integrated into it. It is this Spain that would be integrated into California’s campaign.

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<sup>47</sup> Gufra-Adroher, 136.

The Spain of Irving, was built over previous accounts. As early as the late eighteenth century, before Irving had romanticized Spain, an ambivalent interpretation of it circulated the U.S. as illustrated by Jedidiah Morse's extensively used textbook American Universal Geography (1793),

Both sexes are extremely fond of dancing and possess the greatest aptitude to excel in the art. The favorite dances are the *fandango*, and the *Seguidilla*, both decidedly of Cyprian origin, and wholly offensive to the eye, even of decency.<sup>48</sup>

Spain was then seen as possessing qualities that fascinated Americans even if somehow unpleasant. Nevertheless, Morse's textbook also commented on the Spanish defects derived from their religion: "The Spaniards are bigoted Catholics. They often unite a ceremonial piety with the practice of every vice." Furthermore, Spain's lack of population was explained by the laziness of its inhabitants,

Spain has for a long time been one of the least populous countries in Europe... a more operative cause... may be found in the extreme indolence, which has so long characterized the great body of the Spaniards.<sup>49</sup>

Irving's romantization rendered that country as a bygone Empire whose previous impetus had lead to Columbus's discovery of America and its subsequent conquest. Nevertheless, the course of current events together with Spain's "characteristics," made it unsuitable for progress and undermined the empire.

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<sup>48</sup> Jedidiah Morse, *The American universal geography: A view of the present state of all the empires, kingdoms, states, and republics in the known world, and of the United States of America in particular* (Boston: Thomas and Ebenezer T. Andrews, 1793), 356.

<sup>49</sup> Morse, 354.

## Commissioners Recapitulate

In an article published in the World Fair Magazine, Phelan used the allegorical power of California's geographical location: "The American people have reached the Pacific Ocean—Eureka—and we want the world to know it."<sup>50</sup> What he failed to point out is that while spreading the news, California was accomplishing two other tasks. First, it made explicit how the reached territory, indeed, held Oriental components, and second, that California would be rendered as factual, authentic, and "all its own" a "Spanish" history disseminated within its image. In its marketing campaign California took advantage of circulating ideas and consciously appropriated them through the writing of their history as well as through its most powerful signifier: architecture.

The inauguration discourses of California's pavilion at Chicago, illustrate the simple rhetoric through which California achieved its task of appropriation. First, it claimed as its own the Spanish past of California while minutes later the discourses would detach such history from all the settlers prior to an Anglo California. On his dedication of the California Building, commissioner Phelan accentuated the relevance of California's presence at the CWCE based on its "Spanish" past,

California has a special reason to join in this Columbian Exposition, inspired as it is by the heroism and achievements of that great type of the Spanish navigator, Christopher Columbus; for only fifty years after the discovery of America, the seamen of Spain under Cabrillo, discovered the California coast, and subsequently settled the country. And so we Californians join. I say, with special interest in celebrating the magnificent services to civilization performed by Spain<sup>51</sup>

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<sup>50</sup> World Fair Magazine, 22.

<sup>51</sup> Final Report, 89.

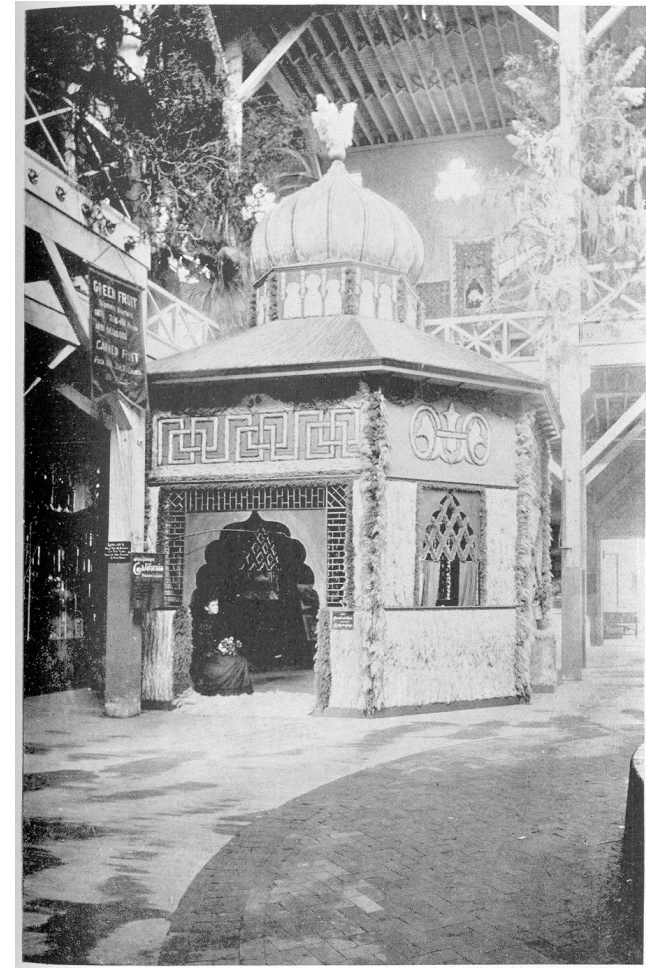
Nevertheless, when commissioner de Young was asked to address the public at the same occasion, in order to emphasize the achievements of the Anglos he pointed out the briefness of California's history: "it is only about forty years since California first began to walk."<sup>52</sup> If De Young's comment allowed the existence of previous inhabitants of California, although in a frozen non-walking historical stage, another of Phelan's statements portrayed them as dead: "The easy and natural growth of California... [will] exhibit the dominance of the American race. It will be a panorama... covering the short space of our State's *life*, less than fifty years."<sup>53</sup>

The preeminence of architecture in communicating the commission statement was stated by its members,

We came here to enlarge our markets and invite a new immigration... and therein you will find the meaning of our building and our exhibits. In the Spanish mission architecture of our building we honor Spain; in our display, we trust, we honor California.<sup>54</sup>

The architectural setting of California's pavilion tinged the visitors' experiences with "Spanish" references. Interior Moorish elements and exterior Oriental features of the Pavilion—that in other cases would not have had such readings—reminded visitors of a "Spanish" Oriental past with which they were familiar.

Thanks to a previously existing conception of California found in earlier accounts, the state's "Spanish" past bore the status of having been saved from destruction. In 1808, an American consul and travel writer William Shaler (1778?-1833) published in Philadelphia's daily newspaper the American Register the first



**2.17 "Pampas Plume Palace" located inside California's pavilion at Chicago**

<sup>52</sup> Final Report, 92.

<sup>53</sup> World Fair Magazine, 25, emphasis added.

<sup>54</sup> Final Report, 89.

known article on the state of California. In it, the journalist praised the state's climate and land's potential for farming exploitation. Nevertheless, the territory had to be freed from a weak government.<sup>55</sup> By 1831—after Mexico's independence from Spain—Americans had the first full-scale view of California in James O. Pattie's (1804?-1850?) The Personal Narrative of James O. Pattie (1831). In this semi-fictional account, besides the government, the inhabitants, were also not welcomed: "its inhabitants are equally calculated to excite dislike, and even the strongest feelings of disgust and hatred."<sup>56</sup> A vision reinforced by Irving's Adventures of Captain Boneville (1837) in which our friend critiqued the "infamous barbarities" of Mexican inhabitants: "...hunting the poor Indian like wild beasts. The Mexicans excel at this savage sport; chasing their unfortunate victims at full speed, noosing them round the neck with their lasos, and then dragging them to death!"<sup>57</sup> California's Mexican interregnum, thus, helped the writing of a history in such a way that a Spanish past could be displayed as authentic and indigenous. The federal Mexican period of California ruled by a constitution modeled after the American one, paradoxically, provided the convenient historical rupture with a Spanish royal past worthy of rescue and preservation. California's building at Chicago in 1893 transmitted a syncretic image combining religious, secular, folk, and foreign, traditions that had been saved, codified *and* incorporated into the imagined America of the time. Such a message stated that California—not the Bosphorus—was where the West encountered the timeless essence of the Orient and rendered it a tantalizing reminder at the end of time.

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<sup>55</sup> James D. Hart, The friends of the Bancroft Library, American Images of Spanish California (Berkeley: University of California, 1960), 2.

<sup>56</sup> Ibid., 2.

<sup>57</sup> Ibid., 5.

The seductive power of this narrative and the power of architecture to transmit it was such that writer William Buel (1849-1920) decided to employ California's message to described the fair as a whole. When hired by the Historical Publishing Company of St. Louis to write a two-page introduction to a portfolio of three hundred photographic views titled The Magic City (1894), he marketed Burnham's ground "essentially dignified in style" through a similar logic,

It is a remarkable thing that architecture attained its greatest perfection... towards the close of the fifteenth century, and contemporary with Columbus. The expulsion of the Moors from Spain was followed by a decline in the constructive art... and so continued until the genius of the Columbian Exposition produced... a composite of the most exquisite architecture of the Moors, and the symmetrical and utilitarian construction of the present. Thus the buildings of the Fair exhibit both renascent and original designs...<sup>58</sup>

His description of the neoclassic architecture of the main basin would have made a perfect introduction to California's pavilion for it was that building, more than Burnham's main basin area, the one successfully displaying such narrative.

The last person to speak on June the 19<sup>th</sup> 1893, at the dedication of California's pavilion was General T. W. Palmer, president of the World's Columbian Commission. In congratulating the Californians he recapitulates for us their discursive practice as reflected in the state's pavilion: "I congratulate the people of California on combining the aesthetic, the social, and the commercial in their State building." Indeed, California's commissioners brought together previous images of Spain, American Zion, and the Orient, further aestheticized and packaged them for commercial purposes, and made their message speak through a state building claimed to be representing them. By

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<sup>58</sup> James William Buel, The Magic City: A Massive Portfolio of Original Photographic Views of the Great World's Fair, Popular Culture in America ed. David Manning White (NY: Arno Press, 1974), [2].

so doing, the European Oriental image that had traveled to the Americas somehow alienated from whichever representational status it may have had in its institutional roots, was being re-empowered.





## **2. Domesticating a Represented Population**

*Californios* were also constructed within the Anglo marketing narrative. These constructed *Californios* provided appealing features to be exploited by the campaign. Nevertheless, *Californios*' "characteristics," built after the previously constructed image of Spain, alienated them by also placing them outside of history and incapable of progress. I will argue that it is because of this conception of *Californios* that the implementation of an Anglo socio economic system—i.e. laws, taxes, trials and sometimes illegal actions—set the grounds for their loss of economic and political power. By so doing, this system alienated *Californios* to the decorative status in which they had been constructed in the first place. Moreover, realizing their loss of power *Californios* attempted to embrace Anglo's "Spanish" identity as an attempt to assert some relevance as a group. By so doing they impeded themselves to participate in the debates regarding Hispanicity that took place in the rest of the Americas and that attempted to locate Hispanicity in relation to modernity.

#### *Marketed Californios*

Anglo depictions of *Californios* are found in California's promotional literature of the time. Charles Nordhoff's (1830-1901) California: For Health, Pleasure, and Residence: A Book for Travelers and Settlers (1872) is representative of it. The book was published within a campaign waged by the Southern Pacific Railroad Company that contributed to the domestication and spread of California's identity.<sup>59</sup> The company

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<sup>59</sup> For a collection of essays on California's image making and its identity see Stephanie Barron and Sheri Bernstein, Made in California: Art, Image, and Identity, 1900-2000 ed. Barron,

hired journalist Nordhoff, an editor of the New York Evening post, to create a “report” that would put forward the identity of the state for the railroad industry. In Nordhoff’s text, one finds a prelude to the statements rehearsed twenty years later by California commissioners. Its preface hoists the territorial arguments bound with the ethnic assumptions previously discussed: “California is our own; and it is the first tropical land which our race has thoroughly master [sic] and made itself at home in.”<sup>60</sup> Nordhoff also pointed out the benefits of a visit to California: “[the traveler] is delighted with the bright skies, the mild climate, the wonderful productiveness of the soil, and the novel customs of its inhabitants.”

California for Health also describes the *Californio* population. The most distinctive feature of Nordhoff’s *Californios* is their status as an endangered species, whose loss of once vast properties resided in their unsuitability for modern business,

Twenty years ago the countrymen of this man owned the whole of California...To-day the majority of them are poor; in fact, very few retain even a part of their old possessions. They were not business men; they liked to live free of care; and they found it easy to borrow money, or to obtain any thing else on credit. They know nothing of interest; even Serfor M. [sic] to-day probably buries his coin...As for the most of his fellow land-owners in the old time, they squandered their money; they borrowed at two, three, and five per cent. a month; they were

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Stephanie and Bernstein, Sheri (Berkeley: Los Angeles County Museum of Art & University of California Press, 2000). For examples of images following up the railroads campaigns see Alfred Runte: “Promoting the Golden West: Advertising and the Railroad,” California History 70, no. 1 (September 1991), 63-75. Regarding the campaign Runte states: “The railroads’ objective was simple and straightforward—to persuade tourists, potential settlers, sportsmen, and health-seekers to book passage on company trains and coastal steamships. To encourage wanderlust, railroad art and advertising called upon many images, from breathtaking scenery to exotic native cultures, to evoke the desired sensations of mystery, adventure, and innocent romance.”

<sup>60</sup> Charles NORDHOFF, California: For Health Pleasure, and Residence: A book for travelers and settlers (NY: Harper & Brothers, 1873). 12

ready to have their notes renewed when they fell due, and to borrow more on top of them...<sup>61</sup>

*Californios* were the agents that enabled Nordhoff to describe tantalizing customs of bygone days. Not only were these people's character charming and discrete: "the people are kindly and amiable... here all went on quietly and decorously as though it was Sunday," most importantly, for a report coined for travelers and settlers, *Californios* sported superlative hospitality,

In those days, said Don Marco Forster, men used to travel from San Diego to Monterey and never spend a cent of money. When night came, you stopped at the nearest house. After supper, you were shown your room. In the morning, a clean shirt was at your bedside; and if you were known to the family, it was customary to place near the bed, on the table, also a sum of money, a hundred or two hundred dollars, from which the visitor, if he needed it, was expected to help himself<sup>62</sup>

The combination of both, *Californios*' existence on the verge of extinction, and their attractive customs helped Nordhoff to articulate a *Californio* population: "I do not doubt that it was a happy life they led these old Californians. But it did not belong to the nineteenth century, and the railroad will, in a year or two, leave no vestige of it this side of the Mexican border."<sup>63</sup> Such Hispanicity proved important to an industry heavily relying on travelers and settlers-to-be. But in serving a commercial venture, not only was *Californios* construct incompatible with a mobile Hispanicity, it was also condemned to extinction due to their incongruity with the "nineteenth century."

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<sup>61</sup> Nordhoff, 152.

<sup>62</sup> Nordhoff, 243.

<sup>63</sup> Nordhoff, 245.

### *“Spanish” Architectural Setting*

In this narrative architecture also had a relevant role. First, twenty-one ruined buildings scattered along California functioned as the factual evidence of California’s “Spanish” past. Even if Spaniards had been in California, the missions were rather temporary frontier structures built with practical concerns in mind, with a political and economic *raison d’être* that had little to do with the romantic Anglo Spain. Regarding the “Moorish” aspect of Spain, it is highly questionable if by the late eighteenth-century—when California’s missions were founded—an Arab presence was acknowledged in the New Spain.<sup>64</sup> Moreover, most of Mexico’s Islamic-inspired architecture had long since disappeared by the eighteenth century. Thus, California’s image was a romantic one that selected certain aspects of this history for revival, renovation, and pure fictional re-imagining.<sup>65</sup>

Secondly, architecture provided the setting in which *Californios* were portrayed. Nordhoff’s 254-page report devoted only two paragraphs to architecture. He described an adobe ranch as a succession of rooms and gave their uses. A more comprehensive explanation of the building or a general description of the façade was not provided. The report portrayed the ranch as a precinct for the quite and decorous tasks taking place in them. When instead, *Californios* attempted to ameliorate their household conditions, Nordhoff mocked them,

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<sup>64</sup> Feliciano (See note 6), after having researched testaments, wedding dowries, Inquisitorial proceedings and seized goods, and commercial shipping logs of the new Spain points out to the scarcity of ceramics considered the quintessential “Moorish” medium as early as the sixteenth-century.

<sup>65</sup> Also worth noticing is the absence of Jewish elements in the narrative of Spain’s Middle Ages foreign influence. For a reflection on the topic see, Luce Lopez-Baralt: “The Qualified Westernness of Spain,” introduction to *Islam in Spanish Literature: From the Middle Ages to the Present* (Leiden-NY: E.J. Brill, 1992), 1-44.

A lady in Santa Barbara amused me by describing the old adobe houses, with earthen floors covered with costly rugs; four-post bedsteads with the costliest lace curtains, and these looped up with lace again; and the senora and seniorita [sic] dragging trains of massive silk and satin over the earthen floors. It must have been an odd mixture of squalor and splendor. An adobe house, no matter what is the wealth or condition of the Californian who lives in it, is simply a long range of rooms.<sup>66</sup>

Again, by displacing *Californios* from an architectural process and denying them the possibility of changing their traditional dwellings, Nordhoff's text defined the architectural boundaries within which *Californios* could move.

The development of nineteenth-century Spanish architecture in California was a widespread phenomenon that has been researched elsewhere.<sup>67</sup> Architecture historian Karen J. Weitze has documented the way in which architectural magazines referred to Spanish architecture as Moorish structures filled with "atmospheres of the Orient."<sup>68</sup> She has also pointed out examples of appropriation such as the connection made between the founding years of the missions and the North American Colonies' Declaration of Independence; or Leland Stanford's (1824-1894) wish to have his Boston architects "adapt the adobe building of California with some higher form of architecture."<sup>69</sup> As a summary, the different terms coined to name a specific architecture

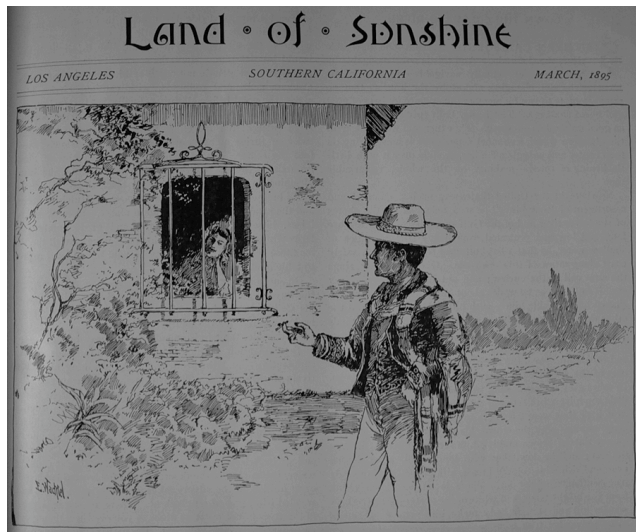
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<sup>66</sup> Nordhoff, 153.

<sup>67</sup> See John Ogden Pohlmann, *California's Mission Myth*, (Ph.D. diss, University of California, Los Angeles, 1974). In his doctoral thesis Pohlmann revises the general conceptual construct of California's Missions and how it fitted within a broader American narrative at the time. In it he devotes his eighth chapter to the illustration of how twenty-one mission structures validated a style labeled after them yet not sharing formal similarities.

<sup>68</sup> Weitze, 2-17.

<sup>69</sup> Weitze. 21.



**2.01 Frontispiece from an issue of Lummis's Land of Sunshine**

style seen after considering the Anglo components of “California” and “Spain,” illustrate how buildings fashioned as “Mission Revival,” “modified mission,” “Mission-Moorish,” “Spanish,” “California Spanish,” “Spanish Colonial,” “California Colonial,” “Mediterranean,” “California Renaissance-Mission Style,” or simply “Mission Style,”<sup>70</sup> signified California’s syncretic narrative.

### *Tectonic Considerations*

In considering the assumptions regarding the *Californio* population within California’s architectural discourse, the case of Charles Fletcher Lummis (1859-1928) constitutes an important example. Editor of the daily *Los Angeles Times* and the monthly magazine *Land of Sunshine*, his writings aggressively put forward clear ethnic assumptions. Even if, as pointed out, Nordhoff had stated: “an adobe house, no matter what is the wealth or condition of the Californian who lives in it, is simply a long range of rooms,” Lummis thought differently if the structure was aimed for Anglo dwellers.

In his article “The Lesson of the Adobe” Lummis wonders about the possibilities of adobe construction: “What... are the lessons the Superior Race might profitably learn from the adobe?” He answers by praising the insulation qualities of thick walls: “The largest lesson of all the adobe is the massive, non-conducting wall.”<sup>71</sup> Such a constructive method, so he holds, would insulate the heat during the day while keeping the warmth in the winter nights that “felt” cold in California. This value of

<sup>70</sup> Such terms were spelled out in academic journals, travel guides and maps, and popular magazines. Pohlmann lists them as signaling a “prevalent confusion” at the time. Rather than confusion, I argue that they illustrate an incorporation of diverse values under the unity of an Anglo image of “California.”

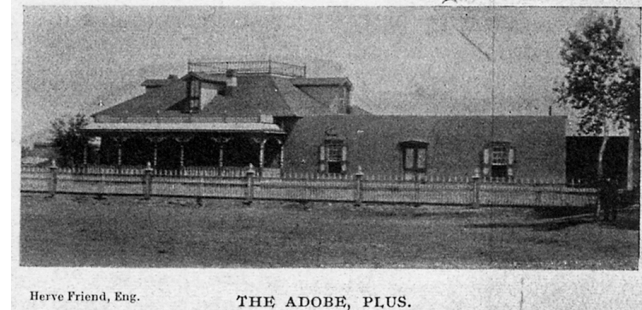
<sup>71</sup> Charles F. Lummis: “The Lesson of the Adobe,” *Land of sunshine* II, no.4 (March, 1895), 65-67.

adobe construction is further carried out in another of his articles where Lummis starts by clearing out ethnic differences for the dubious Anglo reader: “the Saxon race is not as slow as the Spaniards.” However, he points out how his ethnic fellowmen might profit from such a race,

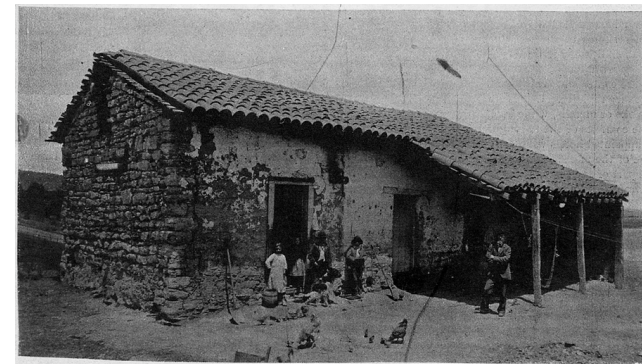
I am half ready to believe that the Almighty did *not* make the rest of mankind in a mere fit of absentmindedness [sic]...The superstition-ridden and unteachable Spaniard had several primary lessons beaten into him in the New World; and among the first and most enduring of them was a new way to spell h-o-u-s-e. For the adobe was not and institution of Spain...Having proved his unprogressiveness by first learning the thousand aboriginal tongues, the Spaniard began to wrestle with the newer lessons...He found that in a country dry enough for it the adobe is the perfect house.<sup>72</sup>

Lummis’s writings illustrate the way in which the Spaniards pre-modernity actually enabled them to contribute to Lummis’ Saxon world.

The Spaniard’s “lesson” was based on the appropriate use of materials in relation to nature and had been learned through superstition and “unprogressiveness.” In addition to removing Hispanics from participating in California’s contemporary events, Lummis also detached them from California’s Spanish past. In 1888 he stated: “Between [California’s] sleepy Spanish past and its sleepless American present, few links remain. Practically the sole staunch survivors of those old days of romance are the venerable Missions.”<sup>73</sup> By referring to the twenty-one architectural ruins as the only “staunch survivors” of the Spanish past, he dismissed the possibility that *Californios*



**2.02 Illustration from Lummi's article "Something About the Adobe"**



**2.03 Illustration from Lummis's article "The Adobe in Architecture"**

<sup>72</sup> Charles F. Lummis: “Something About the Adobe,” Land of Sunshine II, no. 3 (February, 1895), 48-50.

<sup>73</sup> Weitze, 15.



had anything to do with it. By so doing the Spanish past was “California’s all its own,” that is, of course, *Anglo* California’s all its own.

#### Domesticating *Californios*

As useful as *Californios*’ customs may have been for California’s campaign, this population had to be kept within certain margins. Or put in other words, an exotic land still ruled by savages was not the idea of a Promised Land. When Nordhoff praised the climatic and natural wonders of countries south of the U.S. he was quick to point out that a trip to such places would involve both discomfort and danger: “[the traveler] is repelled by an enervating atmosphere, by the dread of malarious diseases, by the semi-barbarous habits of the people, and often by a lawless state of society.”<sup>74</sup> In California, instead, the traveler would be exempted of penalty “[In California], and there only, on this planet, the traveler and resident may enjoy the delights of the tropics without their penalties... strange customs, but neither lawlessness nor semi-barbarism.”

In domesticating California’s territory, the new Anglo population implemented a judicial and economic system that was not in tune with timeless Spaniards. Even if the establishment of this system was not implemented with the specific idea of taking over the previous settlers of California, it was not designed to accommodate them either. From their advantage point the new population contested the territorial rights of the *Californios* and overlooked the implementation of the laws that often opposed the customs praised in the promotional campaign. These actions lead to the domestication of the sellable exotic, neither “lawless” nor “semi-barbarous,” to which Nordhoff referred.

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<sup>74</sup> Nordhoff, 12.

*Californios* recognized this domestication of a “Spanish” California while they where put in a paradoxically distressing situation.<sup>75</sup> In 1855, seven years after the signature of the Guadalupe Hidalgo treaty, an anonymous journalist complained about the slippage between the values praised by the Anglos and the consequences that laws and taxations were having on the *Californio* population,

Were liberty rules, men are not tributaries of the state; they don’t pay pensions nor taxes to keep in their lodges four or six doors or windows from which pure air can enter... There you don’t subject people to obey the caprices of and stubborn thoughts of four old and fanatic old boys whose obstinacy has led to the prohibition of all public entertainment on Sunday, nor you revive inquisitorial practices to govern... no you have prohibitive laws that contradict sound habitudes.<sup>76</sup>

The journalist starts by referring to taxes that obstructed the construction of a weather-sensitive architecture devoted to hospitable lodges owned by *Californios*. Then the journalist refers to the so-called “The Sunday Law” which stated: “Any barbarian or boisterous pastime will be prohibited on Sundays.”<sup>77</sup> Among other things the law prohibited bars, theaters, and bullfight rings to open on Sunday. Aside from limiting some of the customs that create the ambiance praised in the promotional campaign, the law allowed harassment to the *Californios*. Firstly, some bars were allowed to open to

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<sup>75</sup> For an account of various episodes of Californios in the years after the Guadalupe treaty see Leonard PITT, The Decline of the Californios: A Social History of the Spanish-Speaking Californians, 1846-1890 (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1970), and Ellwyn R. Stoddard, Mexican Americans, Ethnic Groups in Comparative Perspective (NY: Random House, 1973). As a summary refer to the Appendix A of this thesis.

<sup>76</sup> Anonymous: “Libertad norte-americana (North-American Liberty),” El Clamor Público (July 3, 1855).

<sup>77</sup> Anonymous: “La ley del domingo (Sunday’s Law),” El Clamor Público (June 19, 1855).

the public while others were banned,<sup>78</sup> and secondly, even when they met at private homes, law officials harassed *Californios*,

On Sunday the 24<sup>th</sup> of June... several people who were entertaining themselves in a judicious and peaceful way in a private house... were raided by several police officers who plotted this assault only to satisfy their rancor against those who belong to the Spanish race.<sup>79</sup>

*Californios* also addressed problems regarding land properties of ex-Mexican citizens. Another article published in August 14 reported on the issue: “[*Californios*] property is not respected...all these acts are not only a violation to existing treatises but also a flagrant attack against the principles of people’s rights.”<sup>80</sup>

Moreover, *Californios* also reported extreme actions outside of the legal framework. In late August 1855 three Mexican were hung without trial in Amador County, and it was then determined to expel all the “Spanish and Mexican” population from there. Those allowed to stay would be held responsible from all offense or crime committed by those who they receive in their homes and, as the official document put it: “six white and respectable Americans” would decide to whom a permission to stay would have been granted. To top it all, those allowed to stay were obliged to register and carry a “passport” at all times.<sup>81</sup>

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<sup>78</sup> Anonymous: “Las Tabernas (The Taberns),” El Clamor Público (June 26, 1855).

<sup>79</sup> Anonymous: “Libertad norte-americana (North-American Liberty),” El Clamor Público (July 3, 1855).

<sup>80</sup> Anonymous: “Los mexicanos en la alta california (Mexicans in the Upper California),” El Clamor Público (August 14, 1855)

<sup>81</sup> Anonymous: “Muerte a los españoles (Death to Spaniards),” El Clamor Público (August 28, 1855)

This practice of population control based on ethnicity was only part of a broader situation that led El Clamor to publish an article addressing the hypocrisy of California's image,

What is the stranger for California?... he is something worst than in the most *inhospitable* land that one could know... The North Americans who pretend to give us humanitarian lessons... Are those who treat us worst than slaves in their own country? It is hard to say; but there are so many facts that corroborate this question that it is impossible to negate them... The events that continue to happen every day are the most eloquent prove of the way in which the sons of South-America, and in general all of the Spanish race, are treated in California.<sup>82</sup>

That *Californios* referred to themselves as members of the “Spanish race” manifests how the difficult situation of the *Californios* made Hispanics seek a unity that would help them to defend from a common enemy. This shared problem became the biggest bound among the *Californios* who then tried to create—or rather embrace—the “Spanish” identity at hand. The commercial and Anglo origin of this identity must have seemed a secondary matter to any who might have realized the irony. It is within this scope that El Clamor was conceived: “a free press is the best warranty for the people, and [*Californios*], more than anyone else need of its help.”<sup>83</sup>

From the articles of El Clamor it is difficult to know how conscious were the *Californios* about the stand they were taking regarding their identity. In 1853, however, an article in El Clamor illustrates how writers conceived of

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<sup>82</sup> Anonymous: “Hospitalidad Californiana (Californian Hospitality),” El Clamor Público (September 18, 1855), emphasis added.

<sup>83</sup> For a scrutiny of a process that creates communities based on language and printed works, as well as how it has been used as a strategy of resistance, see Benedict ANDERSON, Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism (NY: Verso, 1983).

themselves through assumptions formulated by the Anglos, recognized shared, problems, and further tried to appertain to their contemporary Californian society,

...the *Californio* citizens of Spanish race, which are the most threatened in their territorial properties and in all sort of warranties... but it is time to awaken from the current state of prostration and unite our strength with the virtuous part of the American people.<sup>84</sup>

The writer's proposal to unite California's "Spanish race" as a whole together with the Americans, reveals El Clamor's intent to embrace a "Spanish" identity in trying to solve the alienation that they were going through, as problematic and marginal this identity was proving to be.

At the time the meaning of Hispanicity was being disputed in the American countries that had recently gained independence from Spain. In the case of the first republic to which California appertained—Mexico—the struggle for an identity took place all along the nineteenth century. In 1855, the year that El Clamor was funded in Los Angeles, Mexico entered the period known as *La Reforma* (The Reform) that lead to Mexico's second liberal constitution of 1857. By 1858 Benito Juarez (1806-1872), a Mexican lawyer of Zapotec descent was elected president. The U.S. government at the time not only recognized this government but also officially supported its liberal cause.<sup>85</sup>

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<sup>84</sup> Anonymous: "La politica de California (California's Politics)," El Clamor Público (July 3, 1855)

<sup>85</sup> The opposing conservative party supported the joint declaration of war to Mexico on behalf of Spain, France and England. The invasion led to the instauration of an Emperor from the Austrian royal family as wanted by Mexican royalists. The U.S. was at the time trying to acquire territories from both France and Spain, and a strong European presence in Mexico was, thus, not welcomed.

Both the precarious situation in Spain<sup>86</sup> and the influence of French enlightenment ideals made Mexican liberals of the time reject subjection to anything Spanish. In 1868, the philosopher and liberal politician of Aztec descendant Ignacio Ramirez (1818-1879) published an article as a response to another one by the Spanish orator Emilio Castelar (1832-1899) who had critiqued Mexican's complains against the nation who "had bled to death in civilizing the New World." In his article Ramirez recognizes the merits of Spain, nevertheless, he is clear in the animosity against Spain: "Lets not get our hopes up; the last people to whom the nations of the world would like to resemble is the Spanish people."<sup>87</sup> Ramirez ends up advising Castelar: "*Americanícese usted, señor Castelar* (It is you who ought to Americanize yourself, Mr. Castelar)." This dispute was at the heart of Mexico's civil war that lasted since the achievement of its independence until the establishment of Porfirio Díaz's (1930-1915) dictatorship (1876-1911). Moreover, the question of the Spanish identity was also debated within Díaz's intelligentsia and was further carried out by the government arising from the Mexican revolution of 1910. In a territory were *Californios* were

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<sup>86</sup> See page 30.

<sup>87</sup> On the subject of the conception of the Spanish ingredient within Mexico's Spanish past as regarded by the liberals, the coining of the term *Malinchismo* is salient for the argument. Such term is based on the name of the Tlaxcaltec Indian who interpreted for the Spanish conqueror of Mexico Hernán Cortéz and within the liberal rhetoric symbolized the betrayal to the indigenous ethnicities of Mexico. For an essay on the matter, from where the quote is taken, see: Carlos Monsivais: "La Malinche y el malinchismo (The Malinche and Malinchism)," Essay 9 in La Malinche: sus padres y sus hijos (The Malinche: Her Fathers and Her Sons) ed. Margo Glantz (Mexico: Taurus, 2001), 183-194. Relating the liberals' rejection of a Spanish past, the essay also quotes another excerpt of Ramirez article: "'Death to the Gachupines!' was the first cry of my country; and in such a formulation one finds the de-Spanization of Mexico. Is there any Mexican who has not uttered this sacramental words in his life?"

conceived—and conceived of themselves—as a vestige of a bygone Anglo “Spanish” past a similar debate was impossible.

In contradistinction to Mexico, California marketed itself as an authentic site of royalist continuity with Spain. This royal charm applied to leisure destinations, is found in one of George Curtis above-mentioned books of 1854 where he commented about American’s royal fantasies: “Although we are thus defrauded of our rights, royalty never dies from our hearts, and, living in hovels we are still the heirs of palaces.”<sup>88</sup> In serving California’s exotic, the political aspect of California’s “Spanish” image spread isolated from the population it was supposedly representing and further shaped it so that the incongruence of the image was lost along this process. This phenomenon neglected the fact that the economic and cultural system employing the “Spanish” image was actually the one creating the human descendants of a Spanish past with all of its characteristics.

Mexico’s citizens at the time were not going through a particularly cheerful situation themselves. It would be naïve to suggest that in a country of analphabets, undergoing civil war, and where symbols were circulated for wide and fast recognition, misrepresentation and alienation of whole portions of the population did not take place. Nevertheless, even if the parts involved in Mexico’s identity battle had a flattened population in mind, the simple existence of such a battle twisted Mexican identity into what Gramsci later described as hegemony. In it, a process of complex political struggle between different groups leads to alliances gained through the intermediary of ideology.<sup>89</sup> On the contrary, as far as *Californios* went, besides being represented

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<sup>88</sup> Curtis, 193.

<sup>89</sup> For a description of Gramsci’s notion of Hegemony transcending the simple notion of a leveled off society see: Chantal Mouffe: “Hegemony and Ideology in Gramsci,” chapter 5 in

through a stable image, American Exceptionalism alienated them disabling *Californios* to contribute to the identity of the United States.

On September 11 1855 El Clamor published an editorial commemorating Mexico's independence. In light of *Californios*' situation, the article acquires a peculiar relevance. In describing the reasons for a country to pursue independence the conservative writer exposed a condition similar to that of *Californios*. After stating that Mexico could not complain about notorious injustices from its metropolis, the author recognized Spanish people in America as in a process of change: "a race, transplanted from its native soil to another one, acquires different customs, takes other uses, and necessities and tastes that he did not have may become [peculiar]." It is on this premise that the author based his justification for independence. According to the anonymous writer, countries should not pursue independence based on race or land tenure, but in the interest to overcome a state of alienation within their society,

The right for independence is not founded on the authority over the land, which belongs to very few anyway. Nor is it founded on filiations since after three or more generations, the cast that results from the mixture between the invaders and the invaded, can't be representative of any race... The right to throw off the yoke can be founded in one and only one reason... of living under the discretion of foreign men who based on this fact maltreat and look down on the inhabitants...

As self-referential as such text may seem the articles of El Clamor suggest that the readers of this editorial did not identify themselves with the colonial situation described by the journalist.

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Gramsci and Marxist Theory ed. Chantal Mouffe (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1979), 168-201.



## CONCLUSION

The substance matters of this thesis made me think of Gabriel García Márquez's novel Cien años de soledad (1967) (One Hundred Years of Solitude) that traces the rise and fall of the *Buendía* family and the town of Macondo. As I was approaching the end of the thesis I also finished rereading novel, thus, reencountering its closing phrase that I had long forgotten. In the last days of Macondo, its last and only dweller and also the last of the *Buendías*, sits down with a set of parchments that had been left in Macondo five generations before by the gypsy *Melquíades*. The failed attempts to decipher the parchments described along the novel come to an end the moment he successfully starts making sense of them,

Aureliano could not move... because at that prodigious instant *Melquíades*' final keys were revealed to him and he saw the epigraph of the parchments perfectly placed in the order of man's time and space... he knew then that his fate was written in *Melquíades*' parchments... *Melquíades* had not put events in the order of man's conventional time, but had concentrated a century of daily episodes in such a way that they coexisted in one instant... Then the wind began... He was so absorbed that he did not feel the second surge of wind either as its cyclonic strength tore the doors and windows off their hinges, pulled off the roof of the east wing, and uprooted the foundations... Macondo was already a fearful whirlwind of dust and rubble being spun about by the wrath of the biblical hurricane when Aureliano skipped eleven... and he began to decipher the instant that he was living, deciphering it as he lived it, prophesying himself in the act of deciphering the last page of the parchments, as if he were looking into a speaking mirror. Then he skipped again to anticipate the predictions and ascertain the date and circumstances of his death. Before reaching the final line, however, it had already been foreseen that the city of mirrors (or mirages) [Macondo] would be wiped out by the wind and exiled from the memory of men at the precise moment when Aureliano

Babilonia would finish deciphering the parchments, and that everything written on them was unrepeatable since time immemorial and forever more, because races condemned to one hundred years of solitude did not have a second opportunity on earth.<sup>90</sup>

Aureliano Babilonia's deciphering of the parchments constituted, can be read as a powerful allegory about the Anglo Californians' act of writing history whose assumed authenticity authoritatively inscribes meaning, thus replacing memory with text. Melquíades' parchments collapsed different historical stages "at the precise moment when Aureliano Babilonia would finish deciphering," thus, establishing the break between the living and the historical text. Californians did not have parchments like those of One Hundred Years, yet, there is an evident parallel between García-Márquez's destructive power of writing history and events narrated in this thesis. Through the

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<sup>90</sup> Gabriel García Márquez, One Hundred Years of Solitude, trans. Gregory Rabassa (NY: Harper & Row, 1970), 445-448, from the original: "*Aureliano no pudo moverse... porque en aquel instante prodigioso se le revelaron las claves definitivas de Melquíades, y vio el epígrafe de los pergaminos perfectamente ordenado en el tiempo y el espacio de los hombres... entonces sabía que en los pergaminos de Melquíades estaba escrito su destino... Melquíades no había ordenado los hechos en el tiempo convencional de los hombres, sino que concentró un siglo de episodios cotidianos, de modo que todos coexistieran en un instante... Entonces empezó el viento... Estaba tan absorto, que no sintió tampoco la segunda arremetida del viento, cuya potencia ciclónica arrancó de los quicios las puertas y las ventanas, descuajó el techo de la gallería oriental y desarraigó los cimientos... Macondo era ya un pavoroso remolino de polvo y escombros centrifugado por la cólera del huracán bíblico, cuando Aureliano saltó once páginas y empezó a descifrar el instante que estaba viviendo, descifrándolo a medida que lo vivía, profetizándose a sí mismo en el acto de descifrar la última página de los pergaminos, como si se esfuera viendo en un espejo hablado. Entonces dio otro salto para anticiparse a las predicciones y averiguar la fecha y las circunstancias de su muerte. Sin embargo, antes de llegar al verso final... estaba previsto que la ciudad de los espejos (o los espejismos) sería arrasada por el viento y desterrada de la memoria de los hombres en el instante en que Aureliano Babilonia acabara de descifrar los pergaminos, y que todo lo escrito en ellos era irrepetible desde siempre para siempre, porque las estirpes condenadas a cien años de soledad no tenían una segunda oportunidad sobre la tierra.*"

Savage Paradigm, Anglo Californians collapsed into their present a past imagined from their own perspective, and shut *Californios* out the moment they finished “deciphering” them. Being replaced by their own representation, *Californios* got “wiped out by the wind and exiled from the memory of men.”

Aside from the writing of history, a second element of destruction is present in One Hundred Years, i.e., Hispanicity as symbolized by the character of Fernanda del Carpio who bares Spanish characteristics similar to the ones found in California’s “Spanish.” The marriage between Fernanda del Carpio and a member of the Buendía family marks the beginning of the Buendías’ decline and denotes the consequences of making of Spain as an obstacle in a post-colonial condition. In the book Fernanda delights in playing the clavichord, speaking in Latin verse, and talking about falconry and apologetics.<sup>91</sup> These characteristics are the reason for her detachment from the world: “[She] never had an intimate friendship with anyone. Never heard about the wars that bled the country. Never stopped hearing the three o’clock piano lessons.” The contrast between her pomposity and its practical results are evident, and quite significantly, all she ends up doing is “weaving funeral wreaths.”<sup>92</sup>

Yet, in much the same way that the notions of Orientalism or European world fair experiences described in the thesis stop short from explaining nineteenth-century California’s “Spanish”, the notion of Hispanicity also escapes the allegory I have made out of García-Márquez’s text.<sup>93</sup> The main difference between previously theorized

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<sup>91</sup> Ibid., 314.

<sup>92</sup> Ibid.

<sup>93</sup> Regarding the discourse of Orientalism see Edward W. Said, Orientalism (NY: Vintage Books, 1979), for an example of this notion applied to World Fairs see Zeynep Celik, Displaying the Orient: Architecture of Islam at Nineteenth Century World’s Fairs (Berkeley: Berkeley, 1992).

discourses of identity and representation and California's Hispanicity, is the way in which the history of an-other was used as *self*-representation, albeit for commercial reasons, or precisely *because* of them. Anglos indulged in painting watercolors of missions, reading literature about the golden days of a Spanish California, funding Mission and Adobe preservation clubs, attending "Mission Plays," and building the "Spanish" architecture that would provide a setting to their self imaginary. Yet, paradoxically, the history they marketed as theirs—the speaking mirror in which they looked for identity—had the image of an-other. This case seems to suggest that Identity formation operates not only constructing one's identity as an act of absolution of certain characteristics by projecting them onto an other, but also by claiming for oneself a foreign image. By so doing, Anglos tilted the mirror of Hispanicity deflecting identity constraints towards *Californios*, thus, emancipating themselves in expense of such population.

Further research has to be made in order to trace with detail how the discourse of Hispanicity operated both within the *Californio* and the Anglo population. Yet, it seems that for the Anglos, the foreign connotations through which the "Spanish" Californian identity had been constructed, induced a rather benign relationship with their own identity. Having a rupture between a past that was "dead and gone," yet heavily inscribed in the built environment, Californians accidentally got equipped with a liberating history of an-other that appear to temporarily solve their need for identity.

After considering the consequences that a seemingly benign tale had for nineteenth-century *Californios*, another passage from One Hundred Years becomes relevant. Close to the end of the novel, a Spanish character goes back to his long-missed native town in Catalonia (Spain) from Macondo. In Spain, he becomes desperate by the

impossibility to find the land that he had been missing in the Americas and inevitably wishes to go back to Macondo, a desire that he recognizes as impossible to fulfill. Hopeless, he writes back to some of the few inhabitants left in Macondo,

Upset by two nostalgias facing each other like two mirrors, he lost his marvelous sense of unreality and he ended up recommending to all of them that they leave Macondo, that they forget everything he had taught them... and that wherever they might be they always remember that the past was a lie, that memory has no return, that every spring gone by could never be recovered...<sup>94</sup>

The confrontation of the two nostalgias of García Márquez's Spaniard, created the void that actually enabled him to leap out of his impasse. Had *Californios* had a second mirror—the Hispanicity being contested in the rest of the Americas for that matter—to place in front of the Anglo-written “Spanish” history a different outcome would have probably happened.

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<sup>94</sup> Ibid., 408. From the original: “*Aturdido por dos nostalgias enfrentadas como dos espejos, terminó por recomendarles a todos que se fueran de Macondo, que olvidaran cuanto él les había enseñado... y que en cualquier lugar en que estuvieran recordaran siempre que el pasado era mentira, que la memoria no tenía caminos de regreso, que toda primavera Antigua era irrecuperable...*”

## APPENDIX A

Further Anglo domination in the Southwest occurred in 1850, when New Mexico, Utah, and California were designated as territories by the United States. The Anglo system of property ownership was replacing the Indian and Hispano systems of possession or use. Spanish American heirs to ancestral land grants were unable to compete with Anglo lawyers, who could sometimes hold up their titles in technical court proceedings for as long as two decades, during which time taxes had to be paid by the owner and the land could not be sold to pay the tax liens imposed. Moreover, Anglo functionaries appointed for the new territories were the validating officers for land claims and sometimes themselves shared in the acquisition of enormous acreages at a cost of little or nothing to them personally.

...

In 1892 the last and final blow to the Hispano economy was dealt when grazing privileges in United States forest lands were extended to persons other than Hispanos from whom the land had been taken. Depriving Spanish Americans of their traditional economic base—the land—was the critical factor that changed the Hispano-dominated system into an Anglo-dominated system in which Spanish Americans were solely occupants of the lower strata of society when once they had penetrated every level.

...

In the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo, signed at the close of the war with Mexico in 1848, ancient Spanish and Mexican land grants in northern New Mexico were validated as a legal basis for land ownership. These consisted of two basic types. The “common” or group ownership of land (constituting by far the greatest total acreage) did not coincide with the Anglo legal pattern of individual land ownership. From 1854 to 1880 the policy of the office of United States surveyor general was to reject this group form of land ownership. Thus acreages owned under common land grants were declared public property and officially surveyed as government land. The vast majority of this newly acquired federal land was set aside as national forests and park lands during the early years of the Rightful land-grant heirs, trying to legitimize their claims, found the established governmental processes highly involved and cumbersome. Often, vague policies and lack of standardized legal procedures led to “legal” piracy. For example, there are numerous recorded accounts of lands having been confiscated for delinquent taxes or nonpayment of water fees. The legal separation of water rights and land ownership under Anglo laws, a maneuver not understood by those familiar with Spanish legal traditions, allowed easy acquisition of land once full control of water rights was obtained. The practice of purchasing property impounded for delinquent

taxes or water liens, without making reasonable attempts to advise owners (for accepting partial collections, was a calculated use of Anglo legal institutions to overcome land use rights. Further, since the practice of demanding ownership transfers in writing was not common among illiterate peoples, many land titles were legally defective and thus prey to false claims. In some extreme cases even legitimate deeds were destroyed when archives were looted and burned by Anglo officials (Knowlton, 1970:10641065). Extended court battles with complicated proceedings were little protection to the illiterate, poverty-stricken landholder who had to refute illegal claims made by others.

Following the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo in 1848, the question of Spanish and Mexican land grants, an issue central to the problems of the Spanish Americans of northern New Mexico, was also undertaken in California. Just prior to the admission of California as a federal territory in 1850, two reports were made on land grants in California that proved to be somewhat contradictory. The investigation by the Department of Interior generally concluded that the existing land grants were legitimate, but the report from officials of the territory of California took the view that the existing grants were highly questionable, many of them vague and unmanageable due to their enormous size. The federal government then appointed a land commission in 1851 to decide on the validity of each grant, and it decreed, in addition, that each grant holder would be required to file suit against the United States government at his own expense to prove why the land should not become part of the public domain. Between the years 1852 and 1855, a total of 812 suits were filed (Moquin, 1971:202). But while the legality of these claims was being decided, the payment of property taxes by the owners was still required, even though the land could not be sold until a clear title was obtained.

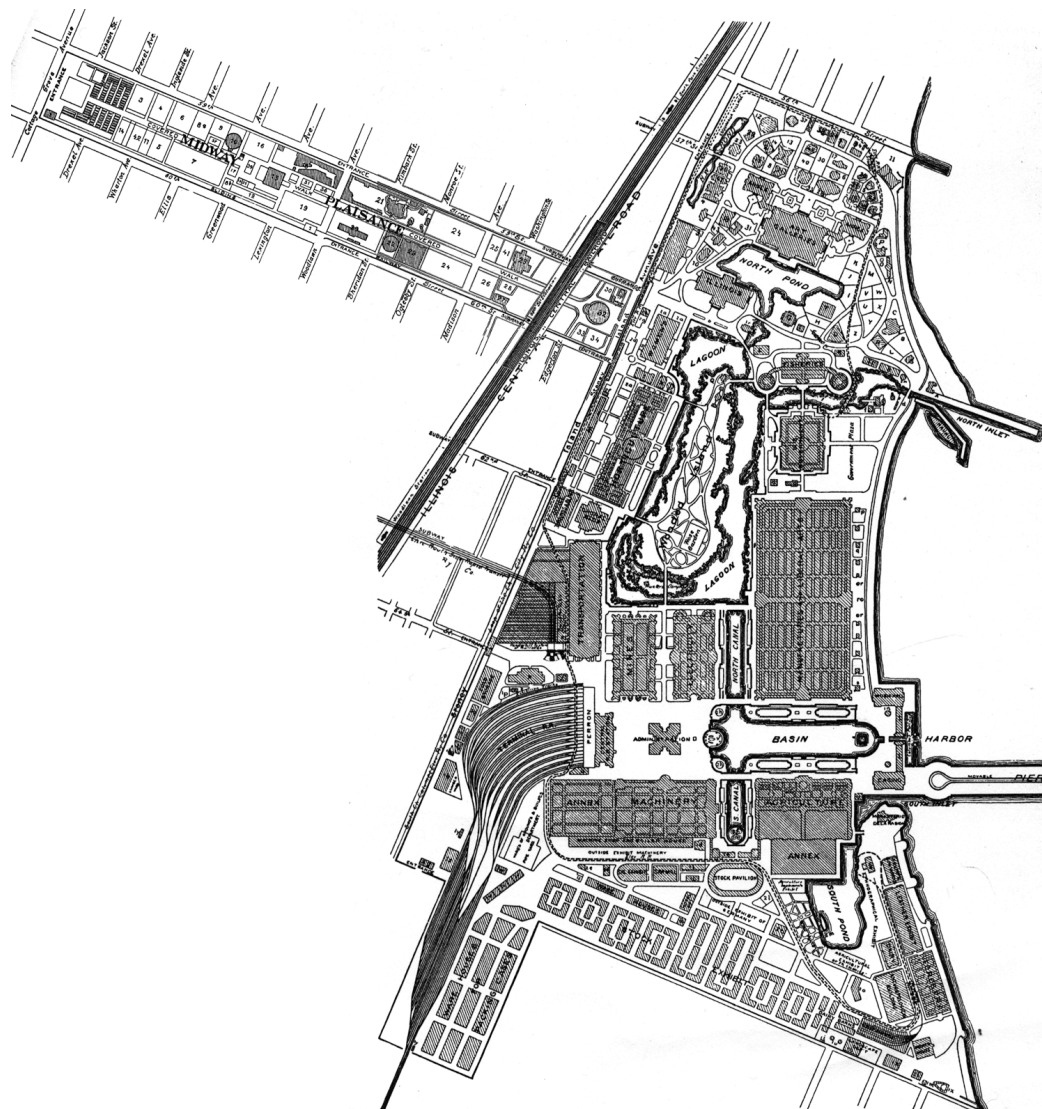
Squatters took over the lands, in some instances going so far as to build fences between landholders' houses and farms and threatening death to trespassers. The Gold Rush brought together in "Sonora Towns," which sprang up throughout the Southwest along the routes to California, the Mexican ne'er-do-wells and the less than puritanical gringos. In the eastern United States, rumors of the rich opportunities in the West, especially California, brought "hordes of solid, but perhaps sanctimonious and prosaic, middle westerners" into the West and Southwest (Servin, 1965:145), California's "first families" were numerically overwhelmed by the Anglo immigration ((Pitt, 1970:83, 251-254) and by 1891 it was reported that only thirty of the elite Spanish families (the *Californios*) still retained any wealth or influence (Moquin, 1971:235). Although a few Mexican Americans still worked as ranch hands, the "Foreign Miners Law" of 1851

restricted them from being employed in the mines. Reduced to mere economic production units in the California agricultural market, the Mexican Americans would never again emerge with the power they commanded during the golden age of the *Californios*.

From the introduction of  
Ellwyn R. Stoddard, Mexican Americans, Ethnic Groups in Comparative Perspective (NY: Random House, 1973).



## Appendix B



## Appendix C



## Sources of Illustrations

### Chapter 1

- 1.01 Leadabrand, Russ, Shelly Lowenkopf, Bryce Patterson. Yesterday's California Seemann's Historic States. Miami: E.A. Seemann Publishing, 1975. 42
- 1.02 Bancroft, Hubert Howe. The Book of The Fair: An Historical and Descriptive Presentation of The World's Science, Art, and Industry, as Viewed through the Columbian Exposition at Chicago in 1893. NY: Bounty Books, [1972?] c1894. 54,55
- 1.03 Bancroft. [236]
- 1.04 Fifty Glimpses at Chicago World's Fair. N.Y.: William J. Kelly, 1893. [un-paginated]
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- 1.07 California World's Fair Commission. Final Report of the California World's Fair Commission. Sacramento: State Office, 1894. Frontispiece
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- 1.09 Buel, James William. The Magic City: A Massive Portfolio of Original Photographic Views of the Great World's Fair Popular Culture in America, Edited by David Manning White. NY: Arno Press, 1974 [Illustration 262]
- 1.10 Goury, Jules. Plans, Elevations, Sections, and Details of the Alhambra. London: Published by Owen Jones, 1842. Plate XXXIII, (Puerta de la sala de los Abencerrages). (Sala de la Barca)
- 1.11 Palmet, Potter and et all. Handbook of the World's Columbian Exposition. Chicago: Rand, McNally & CO.'s, 1893. (Cover)
- 1.12 Curtis, George William. Nile Notes: Of a Howadji. NY: Harper & Brothers, 1856, 365.
- 1.13 Irving, Washington. The Alhambra Irving's Works. N.Y.: Putnam & Sons, 1865, 16b.
- 1.14 Irving, 1865. 46 b.
- 1.15 Irving, 1865. 50 b.
- 1.16 Irving, Washington. The Alhambra Irving's Works. N.Y.: Putnam & Sons, (Daggerro Edition) 1865, 164. (Gypsy of the Albaicin)
- 1.17 California World's Fair Commission. Final Report of the California World's Fair Commission. Sacramento: State Office, 1894. Frontispiece. p 23

## **Chapter 2**

2.01 Frontispiece in Land of Sunshine. March, 1895.

2.02 Lummis, Charles F. "Something About the Adobe." In Land of Sunshine. February, 1895, 49.

2.03 Lummis, Charles F. "The Adobe in Architecture." In Land of Sunshine. July, 1894.

See image credit 1.02

See image credit 1.05

## **Appendix B**

## **Appendix C**

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